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THEODORE ROOSEVELT

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THEODORE ROOSEVELT

AN INTIMATE BIOGRAPHY

BY

WILLIAM ROSCOE THAYER

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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The Riverside Press Cambridge
1919

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TO

EDITH KERMIT ROOSEVELT

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PREFACE

IN finishing the correction of the last proofs of this sketch, I perceive that some of those who read it may suppose that I planned to write a deliberate eulogy of Theodore Roosevelt. This is not true. I knew him for forty years, but I never followed his political leadership. Our political differences, however, never lessened our personal friendship. Sometimes long intervals elapsed between our meetings, but when we met it was always with the same intimacy, and when we wrote it was with the same candor. I count it fortunate for me that during the last ten years of his life, I was thrown more with Roosevelt than during all the earlier period; and so I was able to observe him, to know his motives, and to study his character during the chief crises of his later career, when what he thought and did became an integral part of the development of the United States.

After the outbreak of the World War, in 1914, he and I thought alike, and if I mistake not, this closing phase of his life will come more and more to be revered by his countrymen as an example of the highest patriotism and courage. Regardless of popular lukewarmness at the start, and of persistent official thwarting throughout, he roused the conscience

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of the nation to a sense of its duty and of its honor. What gratitude can repay one who rouses the conscience of a nation? Roosevelt sacrificed his life for patriotism as surely as if he had died leading a charge in the Battle of the Marne.

The Great War has thrown all that went before it out of perspective. We can never see the events of the preceding half-century in the same light in which we saw them when they were fresh. Instinctively we appraise them, and the men through whom they came to pass, by their relation to the catastrophe. Did they lead up to it consciously or unconsciously? And as we judge the outcome of the war, our views of men take on changed complexions. The war, as it appears now, was the culmination of three different world-movements; it destroyed the attempt of German Imperialism to conquer the world and to rivet upon it a Prussian military despotism. Next, it set up Democracy as the ideal for all peoples to live by. Finally, it revealed that the economic, industrial, social, and moral concerns of men are deeper than the political.

When I came to review Roosevelt's career consecutively, for the purpose of this biography, I saw that many of his acts and policies, which had been misunderstood or misjudged at the time, were all the inevitable expressions of the principle which

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was the master-motive of his life. What we had imagined to be shrewd devices for winning a partisan advantage, or for overthrowing a political adversary, or for gratifying his personal ambition, had a nobler source. I do not mean to imply that Roosevelt, who was a most adroit politician, did not employ with terrific effect the means accepted as honorable in political fighting. So did Abraham Lincoln, who also, as a great Opportunist, was both a powerful and a shrewd political fighter, but pledged to Righteousness.

It seems now tragic, but inevitable, that Roosevelt, after beginning and carrying forward the war for the reconciliation between Capital and Labor, should have been sacrificed by the Republican Machine, for that Machine was a special organ of Capital, by which Capital made and administered the laws of the States and of the Nation. But Roosevelt's struggle was not in vain; before he died, many of those who worked for his downfall in 1912 were looking up to him as the natural leader of the country, in the new dangers which encompassed it. "Had he lived," said a very eminent man who had done more than any other to defeat him, "he would have been the unanimous candidate of the Republicans in 1920." Time brings its revenges swiftly. As I write these lines, it is not Capital, but overweening Labor which makes its truculent demands on the Administration

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at Washington, which it has already intimidated. Well may we exclaim, "Oh, for the courage of Roosevelt!" And whenever the country shall be in great anxiety or in direct peril from the cowardice of those who have sworn to defend its welfare and its integrity, that cry shall rise to the lips of true Americans.

Although I have purposely brought out what I believe to be the most significant parts of Roosevelt's character and public life, I have not wished to be uncritical. I have suppressed nothing. Fortunately for his friends, the two libel suits which he went through in his later years, subjected him to a microscopic scrutiny, both as to his personal and his political life. All the efforts of very able lawyers, and of clever and unscrupulous enemies to undermine him, failed; and henceforth his advocates may rest on the verdicts given by two separate courts.

As for the great political acts of his official career, Time has forestalled eulogy. Does any one now defend selling liquor to children and converting them into precocious drunkards? Does any one defend sweat-shops, or the manufacture of cigars under worse than unsanitary conditions? Which of the packers, who protested against the Meat Inspection Bill, would care to have his name made public; and which of the lawyers and of the accomplices in the

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lobby and in Congress would care to have it known that he used every means, fair and foul, to prevent depriving the packers of the privilege of canning bad meat for Americans, although foreigners insisted that the canned meat which they bought should be wholesome and inspected? Does any American now doubt the wisdom and justice of conserving the natural resources, of saving our forests and our mineral supplies, and of controlling the watershed from which flows the water-supply of entire States?

These things are no longer in the field of debate. They are accepted just as the railroad and the telegraph are accepted. But each in its time was a novelty, a reform, and to secure its acceptance by the American people and its sanction in the statute book, required the zeal, the energy, the courage of one man — Theodore Roosevelt. He had many helpers, but he was the indispensable backer and accomplisher. When, therefore, I have commended him for these great achievements, I have but echoed what is now common opinion.

A contemporary can never judge as the historian a hundred years after the fact judges, but the contemporary view has also its place, and it may be really nearer to the living truth than is the conclusion formed when the past is cold and remote and the actors are dead long ago. So a friend's outlined

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portrait, though obviously not impartial, must be nearer the truth than an enemy's can be — for the enemy is not impartial either. We have fallen too much into the habit of imagining that only hostile critics tell the truth.

I wish to express my gratitude to many persons who have assisted me in my work. First of all, to Mrs. Roosevelt, for permission to use various letters. Next, to President Roosevelt's sisters, Mrs. William S. Cowles and Mrs. Douglas Robinson, for invaluable information. Equally kind have been many of Roosevelt's associates in Government and in political affairs: President William H. Taft, former Secretary of War; Senator Henry Cabot Lodge; Senator Elihu Root and Colonel Robert Bacon, former Secretaries of State; Hon. Charles J. Bonaparte, former Attorney-General; Hon. George B. Cortelyou, former Secretary of the Interior; Hon. Gifford Pinchot, of the National Forest Service; Hon. James R. Garfield, former Commissioner of Commerce.

Also to Lord Bryce and the late Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, British Ambassadors at Washington; to Hon. George W. Wickersham, Attorney-General under President Taft; to Mr. Nicholas Roosevelt and Mr. Charles P. Curtis, Jr.; to Hon. Albert J. Beveridge, ex-Senator; to Mr. James T. Williams, Jr.; to Dr.

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Alexander Lambert; to Hon. James M. Beck; to Major George H. Putnam; to Professor Albert Bushnell Hart; to Hon. Charles S. Bird; to Mrs. George von L. Meyer and Mrs. Curtis Guild; to Mr. Hermann Hagedorn; to Mr. James G. King, Jr.; to Dean William D. Lewis; to Hon. Regis H. Post; to Hon. William Phillips, Assistant Secretary of State; to Mr. Richard Trimble; to Mr. John Woodbury; to Gov. Charles E. Hughes; to Mr. Louis A. Coolidge; to Hon. F. D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy; to Judge Robert Grant; to Mr. James Ford Rhodes; to Hon. W. Cameron Forbes.

I am under especial obligation to Hon. Charles G. Washburn, ex-Congressman, whose book, "Theodore Roosevelt: The Logic of his Career," I have consulted freely and commend as the best analysis I have seen of Roosevelt's political character. I wish also to thank the publishers and authors of books by or about Roosevelt for permission to use their works. These are Houghton Mifflin Co.; G. P. Putnam's Sons; The Outlook Co.; The Macmillan Co.

To Mr. Ferris Greenslet, whose fine critical taste I have often drawn upon; and Mr. George B. Ives, who has prepared the Index; and to Miss Alice Wyman, my secretary, my obligation is profound.

W. R. T.

August 10, 1919

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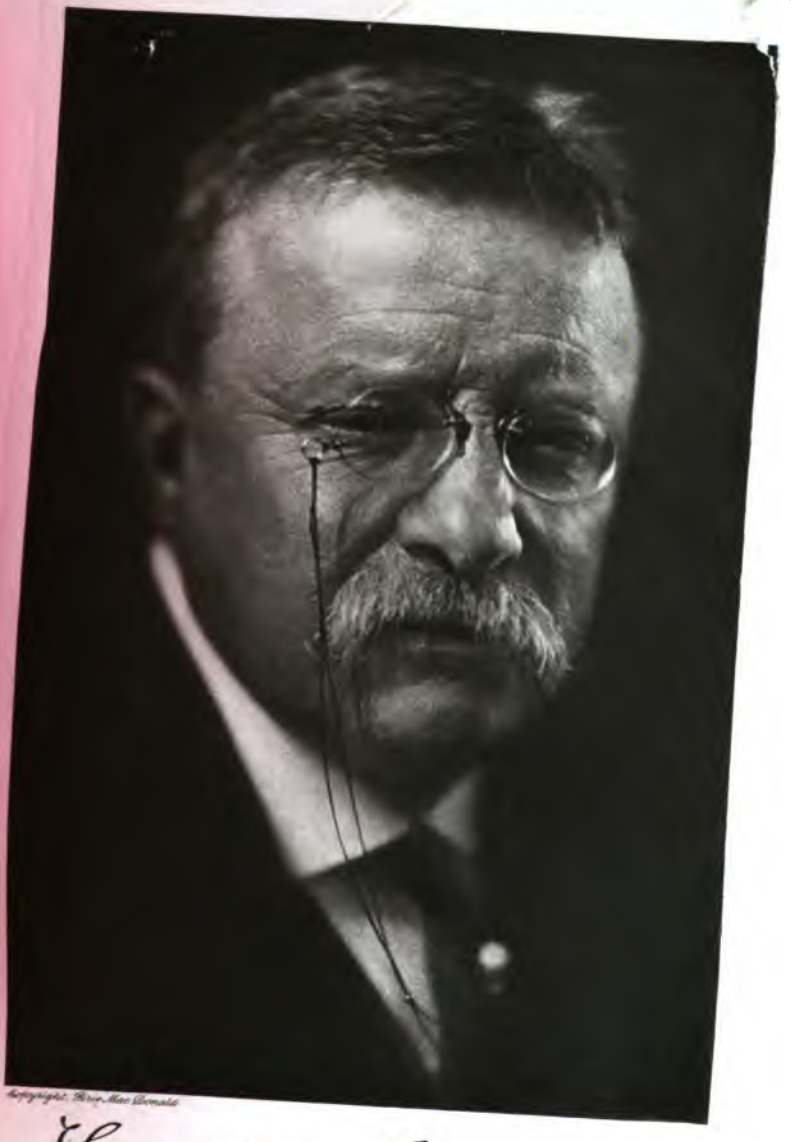

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THEODORE ROOSEVELT *Photogravure Frontispiece*
Photograph by Pirie Macdonald

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ABBREVIATIONS

Autobiography = "Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography." Macmillan Co.; New York, 1914.

*** The titles of other books by Mr. Roosevelt are given without his name as they occur in the footnotes.

Leupp = Francis E. Leupp: "The Man Roosevelt." D. Appleton & Co.; New York, 1904.

Lewis = Wm. Draper Lewis: "The Life of Theodore Roosevelt." John C. Winston Co.; Philadelphia, 1919.

Morgan = James Morgan: "Theodore Roosevelt; The Boy and the Man." Macmillan Co., new ed., 1919.

Ogg = Frederic A. Ogg: "National Progress, 1907–1917." American Nation Series. Harper & Bros.; New York, 1918.

Riis = Jacob A. Riis: "Theodore Roosevelt; the Citizen." Outlook Co.; New York, 1904.

Washburn = Charles G. Washburn: "Theodore Roosevelt; The Logic of His Career." Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916.

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THEODORE ROOSEVELT

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS AND YOUTH

NOTHING better illustrates the elasticity of American democratic life than the fact that within a span of forty years Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt were Presidents of the United States. Two men more unlike in origin, in training, and in opportunity, could hardly be found.

Lincoln came from an incompetent Kentuckian father, a pioneer without the pioneer's spirit of enterprise and push; he lacked schooling; he had barely the necessaries of life measured even by the standards of the Border; his companions were rough frontier wastrels, many of whom had either been, or might easily become, ruffians. The books on which he fed his young mind were very few, not more than five or six, but they were the best. And yet in spite of these handicaps, Abraham Lincoln rose to be the leader and example of the American Nation during its most perilous crisis, and the ideal Democrat of the nineteenth century.

Theodore Roosevelt, on the contrary, was born

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in New York City, enjoyed every advantage in education and training; his family had been for many generations respected in the city; his father was cultivated and had distinction as a citizen, who devoted his wealth and his energies to serving his fellow men. But, just as incredible adversity could not crush Abraham Lincoln, so lavish prosperity could not keep down or spoil Theodore Roosevelt.

In his "Autobiography" he tells us that "about 1644 his ancestor, Claes Martensen van Roosevelt, came to New Amsterdam as a 'settler' — the euphemistic name for an immigrant who came over in the steerage of a sailing ship in the seventeenth century. From that time for the next seven generations from father to son every one of us was born on Manhattan Island." [1] For over a hundred years the Roosevelts continued to be typical Dutch burghers in a hard-working, God-fearing, stolid Dutch way, each leaving to his son a little more than he had inherited. During the Revolution, some of the family were in the Continental Army, but they won no high honors, and some of them sat in the Congresses of that generation — sat, and were honest, but did not shine. Theodore's great-grandfather seems to have amassed what was regarded in those days as a large fortune.

[1] *Autobiography*, 1.

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His grandfather, Cornelius Van Schaack Roosevelt, a glass importer and banker, added to his inheritance, but was more than a mere money-maker.

His son Theodore, born in 1831, was the father of the President. Inheriting sufficient means to live in great comfort, not to say in luxury, he nevertheless engaged in business; but he had a high sense of the obligation which wealth lays on its possessors. And so, instead of wasting his life in merely heaping up dollars, he dedicated it to spending wisely and generously those which he had. There was nothing puritanical, however, in his way of living. He enjoyed the normal, healthy pleasures of his station. He drove his coach and four and was counted one of the best whips in New York. Taking his paternal responsibilities seriously, he implanted in his children lively respect for discipline and duty; but he kept very near to their affection, so that he remained throughout their childhood, and after they grew up, their most intimate friend.

What finer tribute could a son pay than this which follows?

My father, Theodore Roosevelt, was the best man I ever knew. He combined strength and courage with gentleness, tenderness, and great unselfishness. He would not tolerate in us children selfishness or cruelty, idleness, cowardice, or untruthfulness. As we grew older he made us understand that the same standard of clean living was demanded for the boys

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as for the girls; that what was wrong in a woman could not be right in a man. With great love and patience and the most understanding sympathy and consideration he combined insistence on discipline. He never physically punished me but once, but he was the only man of whom I was ever really afraid.[1]

Thus the President, writing nearly forty years after his father's death. His mother was Martha Bulloch, a member of an old Southern family, one of her ancestors having been the first Governor of Georgia. During the Civil War, while Mr. Roosevelt was busy raising regiments, supporting the Sanitary Commission, and doing whatever a non-combatant patriot could do to uphold the Union, Mrs. Roosevelt's heart allegiance went with the South, and to the end of her life she was never "reconstructed." But this conflict of loyalties caused no discord in the Roosevelt family circle. Her two brothers served in the Confederate Navy. One of them, James Bulloch, "a veritable Colonel Newcome," was an admiral and directed the construction of the privateer *Alabama*. The other, Irvine, a midshipman on that vessel, fired the last gun in its fight with the *Kearsarge* before the *Alabama* sank. After the war both of them lived in Liverpool and "Uncle Jimmy" became a rabid Tory. He "was one of the best men I have ever known," writes his nephew

[1] *Autobiography*, 9, 10.

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Theodore; "and when I have sometimes been tempted to wonder how good people can believe of me the unjust and impossible things they do believe, I have consoled myself by thinking of Uncle Jimmy Bulloch's perfectly sincere conviction that Gladstone was a man of quite exceptional and nameless infamy in both public and private life." [1]

Theodore Roosevelt grew up to be not only a stanch but an uncompromising believer in the Union Cause; but the fact that his parents came from the North and from the South, and that, from his earliest memory, the Southern kindred were held in affection in his home, must have helped him towards that non-sectional, all-American point of view which was the cornerstone of his patriotic creed.

The Roosevelt house was situated at No. 28 East Twentieth Street, New York City, and there Theodore was born on October 27, 1858. He passed his boyhood amid the most wholesome family life. Besides his brother Elliott and two sisters, as his Uncle Robert lived next door, there were cousins to play with and a numerous kindred to form the background of his young life. He was, fortunately, not precocious, for the infant prodigies of seven, who become the amazing omniscients of twenty-

[1] *Autobiography*, 16.

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three, are seldom heard of at thirty. He learned very early to read, and his sisters remember that when he was still in starched white petticoats, with a curl carefully poised on top of his head, he went about the house lugging a thick, heavy volume of Livingstone's "Travels" and asking some one to tell him about the "foraging ants" described by the explorer. At last his older sister found the passage in which the little boy had mistaken "foregoing" for "foraging." No wonder that in his mature years he became an advocate of reformed spelling. His sense of humor, which flashed like a mountain brook through all his later intercourse and made it delightful, seems to have begun with his infancy. He used to say his prayers at his mother's knee, and one evening when he was out of sorts with her, he prayed the Lord to bless the Union Cause; knowing her Southern preferences he took this humorous sort of vengeance on her. She, too, had humor and was much amused, but she warned him that if he repeated such impropriety at that solemn moment, she should tell his father.

Theodore and the other children had a great fondness for pets, and their aunt, Mrs. Robert, possessed several of unusual kinds — pheasants and peacocks which strutted about the back yard and a monkey which lived on the back piazza. They

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were afraid of him, although they doubtless watched his antics with a fearful joy. From the accounts which survive, life in the nursery of the young Roosevelts must have been a perpetual play-time, but through it all ran the invisible formative influence of their parents, who had the art of shaping the minds and characters of the little people without seeming to teach.

Almost from infancy Theodore suffered from asthma, which made him physically puny, and often prevented him from lying down when he went to bed. But his spirit did not droop. His mental activity never wearied and he poured out endless stories to the delight of his brother and sisters. "My earliest impressions of my brother Theodore," writes his sister, Mrs. Robinson, "are of a rather small, patient, suffering little child, who, in spite of his suffering, was the acknowledged head of the nursery. . . . These stories," she adds, "almost always related to strange and marvelous animal adventures, in which the animals were personalities quite as vivid as Kipling gave to the world a generation later in his 'Jungle Books.'"

Owing to his delicate health Theodore did not attend school, except for a little while, when he went to Professor McMullen's Academy on Twentieth Street. He was taught at home and he prob-

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ably got more from his reading than from his teachers. By the time he was ten, the passion for omnivorous reading which frequently distinguishes boys who are physically handicapped, began in him. He devoured *Our Young Folks*, that excellent periodical on which many of the boys and girls who were his contemporaries fed. He loved tales of travel and adventure; he loved Cooper's stories, and especially books on natural history.

In summer the children spent the long days out of doors at some country place, and there, in addition to the pleasure of being continuously with nature, they had the sports and games adapted to their age. Theodore was already making collections of stones and other specimens after the haphazard fashion of boys. The young naturalist sometimes met with unexpected difficulties. Once, for instance, he found a litter of young white mice, which he put in the ice-chest for safety. His mother came upon them, and, in the interest of good housekeeping, she threw them away. When Theodore discovered it he flew into a tantrum and protested that what hurt him most was "the loss to Science! the loss to Science!" On another occasion Science suffered a loss of unknown extent owing to his obligation to manners. He and his cousin had filled their pockets and whatever bags they had with specimens. Then

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they came upon two toads, of a strange and new variety. Having no more room left, each boy put one of them on top of his head and clapped down his hat. All went well till they met Mrs. Hamilton Fish, a great lady to whom they had to take off their hats. Down jumped the toads and hopped away, and Science was never able to add the *Bufo Rooseveltianus* to its list of Hudson Valley reptiles.

In 1869 Mr. Roosevelt took his family to Europe for a year. The children did not care to go, and from the start Theodore was homesick and little interested. Of course, picture galleries meant nothing to a boy of ten, with a naturalist's appetite, and he could not know enough about history to be impressed by historic places and monuments. He kept a diary from which Mr. Hagedorn[1] prints many amusing entries, some of which I quote:

Munich, October. "In the night I had a nightmare dreaming that the devil was carrying me away and had collorer morbos (a sickness that is not very dangerous) but Mama patted me with her delicate fingers."

Little Conie also kept a diary: the next entry is from it:

Paris. "I am so glad Mama has let me stay in the butiful hotel parlor while the poor boys have been dragged off to the orful picture galary."

[1] H. Hagedorn: *The Boy's Life of Theodore Roosevelt.* Harper & Bros. 1918.

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Now Theodore again:

Paris, November 26. "I stayed in the house all day, varying the day with brushing my hair, washing my hands and thinking in fact haveing a verry dull time."

"Nov. 27. I Did the same thing as yesterday."

Chamounix. "I found several specimens to keep and we went on the great glacier called 'Mother of ice!'"

"We went to our cousins school at Waterloo. We had a nice time but met Jeff Davises son and some sharp words ensued."

Venice. "We saw a palace of the doges. It looks like a palace you could be comfortable and snug in (which is not usual) — We went to another church in which Conie jumped over tombstones spanked me banged Ellies head &c."

"Conie" was his nickname for his younger sister Corinne.[1]

November 22. "In the evening Mama showed me the portrait of Eidieth Carow and her face stirred up in me homesickness and longings for the past which will come again never aback never."

The little girl, the sight of whose portrait stirred such longings for the past in the heart of the young Theodore, was Edith Carow, the special playmate of his sister Conie and one of the intimate group whom he had always known. Years later she became his wife.

The Roosevelt family returned to New York in May, 1870, and resumed its ordinary life. Theodore, whom one of his fellow travelers on the steamer

[1] She subsequently married Mr. Douglas Robinson.

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remembers as "a tall thin lad with bright eyes and legs like pipestems," developed rapidly in mind, but the asthma still tormented him and threatened to make a permanent invalid of him. His father fitted up in the house in Twentieth Street a small gymnasium and said to the boy in substance, "You have brains, but you have a sickly body. In order to make your brains bring you what they ought, you must build up your body; it depends upon you." The boy felt both the obligation and the desire; he willed to be strong, and he went through his gymnastic exercises with religious precision. What he read in his books about knights and paladins and heroes had always greatly moved his imagination. He wanted to be like them. He understood that the one indispensable attribute common to all of them was bodily strength. Therefore he would be strong. Through all his suffering he was patient and determined. But I recall no other boy, enfeebled by a chronic and often distressing disease, who resolved as he did to conquer his enemy by a wisely planned and unceasing course of exercises.

Improvement came slowly. Many were the nights in which he spent hours gasping for breath. Sometimes on summer nights his father would wrap him up and take him on a long drive through the darkness in search of fresh air. But no matter how hard

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the pinch, the boy never complained, and whenever there was a respite his vivacity burst forth as fresh as ever. He could not attend school with other boys and, indeed, his realization that he could not meet them on equal physical terms made him timid when he was thrown with them. So he pursued his own tastes with all the more zeal. He read many books, some of which seemed beyond a boy's ken, but he got something from each of them. His power of concentration already surprised his family. If he was absorbed in a chapter, nothing which went on outside of him, either noise or interruption, could distract his attention. His passion for natural history increased. At the age of ten, he opened in one of the rooms of his home "The Roosevelt Museum of Natural History." Later, he devoted himself more particularly to birds, and learned from a taxidermist how to skin and stuff his specimens.

In 1873, President Grant appointed Mr. Roosevelt a Commissioner to the Vienna Exposition and the Roosevelt family made another foreign tour. Hoping to benefit Theodore's asthma they went to Algiers, and up the Nile, where he was much more interested in the flocks of aquatic fowl than in the half-buried temples of Dendera or the obelisks and pylons of Karnak. He even makes no mention of the Pyramids, but records with enthusiasm that he

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found at Cairo a book by an English clergyman, whose name he forgot, on the ornithology of the Nile, which greatly helped him. Incidentally, he says that from the Latin names of the birds he made his first acquaintance with that language.

While Mr. Roosevelt attended to his duties in Vienna the younger children were placed in the family of Herr Minckwitz, a Government official at Dresden. There, Theodore, "in spite of himself," learned a good deal of German, and he never forgot his pleasant life among the Saxons in the days before the virus of Prussian barbarism had poisoned all the non-Prussian Germans. Minckwitz had been a Liberal in the Revolution of 1848, a fact which added to Theodore's interest in him.

On getting home, Theodore, who was fifteen years old, set to work seriously to fit himself to enter Harvard College. Up to this time his education had been unmethodical, leaving him behind his fellows in some subjects and far ahead of them in others. He had the good fortune now to secure as a tutor Mr. Arthur H. Cutler, for many years head of the Cutler Preparatory School in New York City, thanks to whose excellent training he was able to enter college in 1876. During these years of preparation Theodore's health steadily improved. He had a gun and was an ardent sportsman, the in-

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centive of adding specimens to his collection of birds and animals outweighing the mere sport of slaughter. At Oyster Bay, where his father first leased a house in 1874, he spent much of his time on the water, but he deemed sailing rather lazy and unexciting, compared with rowing. He enjoyed taking his row-boat out into the Sound, and, if a high head wind was blowing, or the sea ran in white-caps, so much the better. He was now able to share in all of the athletic pastimes of his companions, although, so far as I know, he never indulged in baseball, the commonest game of all.

When he entered Harvard as a Freshman in 1876, that institution was passing through its transition from college to university, which had begun when Charles W. Eliot became its President seven years before. In spite of vehement assaults, the Great Educator pushed on his reform slowly but resistlessly. He needed to train not only the public but many members, perhaps a majority, of his faculty. Young Roosevelt found a body of eight hundred undergraduates, the largest number up to that time. While the Elective System had been introduced in the upper classes, Freshmen and Sophomores were still required to take the courses prescribed for them.

To one who looks back, after forty years, on the Harvard of that time there was much about it, the

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loss of which must be regretted. Limited in many directions it was, no doubt, but its very limitations made for friendship and for that sense of intimate mutual relationship, out of which springs mutual affection. You belonged to Harvard, and she to you. That she was small, compared with her later magnitude, no more lessened your love for her, than your love for your own mother could be increased were she suddenly to become a giantess. The undergraduate community was not exactly a large family, but it was, nevertheless, restricted enough not only for a fellow to know at least by sight all of his classmates, but also to have some knowledge of what was going on in other classes as well as in the College as a whole. Academic fame, too, had a better chance then than it has now. There were eight or ten professors, whom most of the fellows knew by sight, and all by reputation; now, however, I meet intelligent students who have never heard even the name of the head of some department who is famous throughout the world among his colleagues, but whose courses that student has never taken.

In spite of the simplicity and the homelikeness of the Harvard with eight hundred undergraduates, however, it was large enough to afford the opportunity of meeting men of many different tastes and men from all parts of the country. So it gave free

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play to the development of individual talents, and its standard of scholarship was already sufficiently high to ensure the excellence of the best scholars it trained. One quality which we probably took little note of, although it must have affected us all, sprang from the fact that Harvard was still a *crescent* institution; she was in the full vigor of growth, of expansion, of increase, and we shared insensibly from being connected with that growth. In retrospect now, and giving due recognition to this crescent spirit, I recall that, in spite of it, Omar Khayyám was the favorite poet of many of us, that introspection, which sometimes deepened into pessimism, was in vogue, and that a spiritual or philosophic languorous disenchantment sicklied o'er the somewhat mottled cast of our thought.

Roosevelt took rooms at No. 16 Winthrop Street, a quiet little lane midway between the College Yard and Charles River, where he could pursue his hobbies without incessant interruption from casual droppers-in. Here he kept the specimens which he went on collecting, some live — a large turtle and two or three harmless snakes, for instance — and some dead and stuffed. He was no "grind"; the gods take care not to mix even a drop of pedantry in the make-up of the rare men whom they destine for great deeds or fine works. Theodore was already

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so much stronger in his health that he went on to get still more strength. He had regular lessons in boxing. He took long walks and studied the flora and fauna of the country round Cambridge in his amateurish but intense way. During his first Christmas vacation, he went down to the Maine Woods and camped out, and there he met Bill Sewall, a famous guide, who remained Theodore's friend through life, and Wilmot Dow, Sewall's nephew, another woodsman; and this trip, subsequently followed by others, did much good to his physique. He still had occasional attacks of asthma — he "guffled" as Bill Sewall called it — and they were sometimes acute, but his tendency to them slowly wore away.

All his days Roosevelt was proud of being a Harvard man. Even in the period when academic Harvard was most critical of his public acts, he never wavered in his devotion to Alma Mater herself, that dear and lovely Being, who, like the ideal of our country, lives on to inspire us in spite of unsympathetic administrations and unloved leaders.

"The One remains, the many change and pass."

Nevertheless, in his "Autobiography," Theodore makes very scant record of his college life. "I thoroughly enjoyed Harvard," he says, "and I am sure

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it did me good, but only in the general effect, for there was very little in my actual studies which helped me in after life."[1] Like nine out of ten men who look back on college he could make no definite estimate of the actual gains from those four years; but it is precisely the indefiniteness, the elusiveness of the college experience which marks its worth. This is not to be reckoned financially by an increase in dollars and cents, or intellectually, by so many added foot-pounds of knowledge. Harvard College was of inestimable benefit to Roosevelt, because it enabled him to find himself — to be a man with his fellow men.

During his youth his physical handicap had rather cut him off from companionship on equal terms with his fellows. Now, however, he could enter with zest in their sports and societies. At the very beginning of his Freshman year he showed his classmates his mettle. During the presidential torchlight parade when the jubilant Freshmen were marching for Hayes, some Tilden man shouted derisively at them from a second-story window and pelted them with potatoes. It was impossible for them to get at him, but Theodore, who was always stung at any display of meanness — and it was certainly mean to attack the paraders when they could not retaliate

[1] *Autobiography*, 27.

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— stood out from the line and shook his fist at the assailant. His fellow marchers asked who their champion was, and so the name of Roosevelt and his pugnacious little figure became generally known to them. He was little then, not above five feet six in height, and under one hundred and thirty pounds in weight. By degrees they all knew him. His unusual ways, his loyalty to his hobbies, which he treated not as mere whims but as being worthy of serious application, his versatility, his outspokenness, his almost unbroken good-nature, attracted most of the persons with whom he came in contact. He rose to be President of the Natural History Society, a distinction which implied some real merit in its possessor. His family antecedents, but still more his personal qualities, made easy for him the ascent of the social terraces at Harvard — the Dicky, the Hasty Pudding Club, and the Porcellian. He was editor of the *Harvard Advocate*, which opened the door of the O.K. Society, where he found congenial intellectual companionship with the editors from the classes above and below him; and when Dr. Edward Everett Hale wished to revive and perpetuate the Alpha Delta Phi Fraternity, Roosevelt was one of the half-dozen men from the Class of 1880 whom he selected.

My first definite recollection of him is at the

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annual dinner of the *Harvard Crimson* in January or February, 1879. He was invited as a guest to represent the *Advocate*. Since entering college I had met him casually many times and had heard of his oddities and exuberance; but throughout this dinner I came to feel that I knew him. On being called on to speak he seemed very shy and made, what I think he said, was his maiden speech. He still had difficulty in enunciating clearly or even in running off his words smoothly. At times he could hardly get them out at all, and then he would rush on for a few sentences, as skaters redouble their pace over thin ice. He told the story of two old gentlemen who stammered, the point of which was, that one of them, after distressing contortions and stoppages, recommended the other to go to Dr. X, adding, "He cured me."

A trifling bit of thistledown for memory to have preserved after all these years; but still it is interesting to me to recall that this was the beginning of the public speaking of the man who later addressed more audiences than any other orator of his time and made a deeper impression by his spoken word.

One other reminiscence of Roosevelt at Harvard, almost as unsubstantial as this. Late in his Senior year we had a committee meeting of the Alpha Delta

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Photograph by J. Notman, Boston

ROOSEVELT IN 1880
As a Senior at Harvard College

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Phi in Charles Washburn's room at 15 Holworthy. Roosevelt and I sat in the window-seat overlooking the College Yard and chatted together in the intervals when business was slack. We discussed what we intended to do after graduation. "I am going to try to help the cause of better government in New York City; I don't know exactly how," said Theodore.

I recall, still, looking hard at him with an eager, inquisitive look and saying to myself, "I wonder whether he is the real thing, or only the bundle of eccentricities which he appears." There was in me then, as there has always been, a mingling of skepticism and of deep reverence for those who dealt with reality, and I had not had sufficient opportunity to determine whether Roosevelt was *real* or not. One at least of his classmates, however, saw portents of greatness in Theodore, from their Freshman year, and most of us, even when we were amused and puzzled by his "queerness," were very sure that the man from whom they sprang was not commonplace.

So far as I remember, Roosevelt was the first undergraduate to own and drive a dog-cart. This excited various comments; so did the reddish, powder-puff side whiskers which no chaffing could make him cut. There was never the slightest suggestion of the gilded youth about him; though dog-carts, especially when owned by young men,

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implied the habits and standards of the gilded rich. How explain the paradox? On the other hand, Theodore taught Sunday School at Christ Church, but he was so muscular a Christian that the decorous vestrymen thought him an unwise guide in piety. For one day a boy came to class with a black eye which he had got in fighting a larger boy for pinching his sister. Theodore told him that he did perfectly right — that every boy ought to defend any girl from insult — and he gave him a dollar as a reward. The vestrymen decided that this was too flagrant approval of fisticuffs; so the young teacher soon found a welcome in the Sunday School of a different denomination.

Of all the stories of Roosevelt's college career, that of his boxing match is most vividly remembered. He enrolled in the light-weight sparring at the meeting in the Harvard Gymnasium on March 22, 1879, and defeated his first competitor. When the referee called "time," Roosevelt immediately dropped his hands, but the other man dealt him a savage blow on the face, at which we all shouted, "Foul, foul!" and hissed; but Roosevelt turned towards us and cried out "Hush! He did n't hear," a chivalrous act which made him immediately popular. In his second match he met Hanks. They both weighed about one hundred and thirty-five pounds,

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but Hanks was two or three inches taller and he had a much longer reach, so that Theodore could not get in his blows, and although he fought with unabated pluck, he lost the contest. More serious than his short reach, however, was his near-sightedness, which made it impossible for him to see and parry Hanks's lunges. When time was called after the last round, his face was dashed with blood and he was much winded; but his spirit did not flag, and if there had been another round, he would have gone into it with undiminished determination. From this contest there sprang up the legend that Roosevelt boxed with his eyeglasses lashed to his head, and the legend floated hither and thither for nearly thirty years. Not long ago I asked him the truth. "Persons who believe that," he said, "must think me utterly crazy; for one of Charlie Hanks's blows would have smashed my eyeglasses and probably blinded me for life."

In a class of one hundred and seventy he graduated twenty-second, which entitled him to membership in the Phi Beta Kappa, the society of high scholars. To one who examines his academic record wisely, the best symptom is that he did fairly well in several unrelated subjects, and achieved preëminence in one, natural history. He had the all-round quality which shows more promise than does a

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propensity to light on a particular topic and suck it dry; but he had also power of concentration and thoroughness. As I have just said, he was a happy combination of the amateurish and intense. His habit of absorption became a by-word; for if he visited a classmate's room and saw a book which interested him, instead of joining in the talk, he would devour the book, oblivious of everything else, until the college bell rang for the next lecture, when he would jump up with a start, and dash off. The quiet but firm teaching of his parents bore fruit in him: he came to college with a body of rational moral principles which he made no parade of, but obeyed instinctively. And so, where many young fellows are thrown off their balance on first acquiring the freedom which college life gives, or are dazed and distracted on first hearing the babel of strange philosophies or novel doctrines, he walked straight, held himself erect, and was not fooled into mistaking novelty for truth, or libertinism for manliness.

Two outside events which deeply influenced him must be noted. During his Sophomore year his father died; and during his Senior year, Theodore became engaged to Miss Alice Hathaway Lee, daughter of George C. Lee, of Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts.

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CHAPTER II

BREAKING INTO POLITICS

ROOSEVELT was a few months less than twenty-two years old when he graduated from Harvard. His career in college had wrought several important changes in him. First of all, his strength was confirmed. Although he still suffered occasionally from asthma, he was no longer handicapped. In business, or in pleasure, he did not need to consider his health. Next, he had come to some definite decision as to what he would do. His earlier dream of becoming a professor of natural history had faded away. With the inpouring of vigor into his constitution the ideal of an academic life, often sedentary in mind as well as in body, ceased to lure him. He craved activity, and this craving was bound to grow more urgent as he acquired more strength. Next, and this consideration must not be neglected, he was free to choose. His father's death left him the possessor of a sufficient fortune to live on comfortably without need of working to earn his bread and butter — the motive which determines most young men when they start in life. Finally, his father's example, reinforced by wholesome advice,

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quickened in Theodore his sense of obligation to the community. Having money, he must use it, not for mere personal gratification, but in ways which would benefit those who were deprived, or outcast, or bereft. But Theodore was too young and too energetic to be contented with the life of a philanthropist, no matter how noble and necessary its objects might be. He had already accepted Emerson's dictum:

> "He who feeds men, serves a few;
> He serves all who dares be true."

Young as he was, he divined that much of the charitable work, to which good people devote themselves in order to lighten or relieve the ills which the sins and errors of mankind beget, would be needless if the remedy were applied, as it ought to be, to fundamental social conditions. These, he believed, could be reached in many cases through political agency, and he resolved, therefore, to make a trial of his talents in political life.

The point at which he decided to "break into politics," as he expressed it, was the Assembly, or Lower House of the New York State Legislature. Most of his friends and classmates, on hearing of his plan, regarded it as a proof of his eccentricity; a few of them, the more discerning, would not prejudge him, but were rather inclined to hope. By

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tradition and instinct, he was a Republican, and in order to learn the political ropes he joined the Twenty-first District Republican Association of New York City. The district consisted chiefly of rich, respectable, and socially conspicuous inhabitants of the vortex metropolis, with a leaven of the "masses." The "classes" had no real zeal for discharging their political duty. They subscribed to the campaign fund, but had too delicate a sense of propriety to ask how their money was spent. A few of them — and these seemed to be endowed with a special modicum of patriotism — even attended the party primaries in which candidates were named. The majority went to the polls and cast their vote on election day, if it did not rain or snow.

For a young man of Roosevelt's position to desire to take up politics seemed to his friends almost comic. Politics were low and corrupt; politics were not for "gentlemen"; they were the business and pastime of liquor-dealers, and of the degenerates and loafers who frequented the saloons, of horse-car conductors, and of many others whose ties with "respectability" were slight.

To join the organization, Roosevelt had to be elected to the Twenty-first District Republican Club, for the politicians of those days kept their organization close, not to say exclusive, and in this

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way they secured the docility of their members. The Twenty-first District Club met in Morton Hall, a dingy, barnlike room situated over a saloon, and furnished severely with wooden benches, many spittoons, and a speaker's table decorated with a large pitcher for ice-water. The regular meetings came once a month and Roosevelt attended them faithfully, because he never did things by halves, and having made up his mind to learn the mechanism of politics, he would not neglect any detail.

Despite the shyness which ill health caused him in his youth, he was really a good "mixer," and, growing to feel more sure of himself, he met men on equal terms. More than that, he had the art of inspiring confidence in persons of divers sorts and, as he was really interested in knowing their thoughts and desires, it never took him long to strike up friendly relations with them.

Jake Hess, the Republican "Boss" of the Twenty-first District, evidently eyed Roosevelt with some suspicion, for the newcomer belonged to a class which Jake did not desire to see largely represented in the business of "practical politics," and so he treated Roosevelt with a "rather distant affability." The young man, however, got on well enough with the heelers — the immediate trusty followers of the Boss — and with the ordinary members. They

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probably marveled to see him so unlike what they believed a youth of the "kid-glove" and "silk-stocking" set would be, and they accepted him as a "good fellow."

Of all Roosevelt's comrades during this first year of initiation, a young Irishman named Joe Murray was nearest to him, an honest fellow, fearless and stanch, who remained his loyal friend for forty years. Murray began as a Democrat of the Tammany Hall tribe, but having been left in the lurch by his Boss at an election, he determined to punish the Boss, and this he did at the first opportunity by throwing his influence on the side of the Republican candidate. The Republicans won, although the district was overwhelmingly Democratic, and Murray joined the Republican Party. He worked in the district where Jake Hess ruled. Like other even greater men, Jake became arrogant and treated the gang under him with condescension. Murray resented this and resolved that he would humble the Boss by supporting Roosevelt as a candidate for the Assembly. Hess protested, but could not prevent the nomination and during the campaign he seems to have supported the candidate whom he had not chosen.

Roosevelt sent the following laconic appeal to some of the voters of his district:

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New York, November 1, 1881.

DEAR SIR:

Having been nominated as a candidate for member of Assembly for this District, I would esteem it a compliment if you honor me with your vote and personal influence on Election day.

Very respectfully
THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Certainly, nothing could be simpler than this card, which contains no puff of either the party or the candidate, or no promise. It drew a cordial response.

Twenty-first Assembly District.
40th to 86th Sts., Lexington to 7th Aves.

We cordially recommend the voters of the Twenty-first Assembly District to cast their ballots for

Theodore Roosevelt

for member of Assembly

and take much pleasure in testifying to our appreciation of his high character and standing in the community. He is conspicuous for his honesty and integrity, and eminently qualified to represent the District in the Assembly.

New York November 1, 1881

F. A. P. Barnard, William T. Black, Willard Bullard, Joseph H. Choate, William A. Darling, Henry E. Davies, Theodore W. Dwight, Jacob Hess, Morris K. Jesup, Edward Mitchell, William F. Morgan, Chas. S. Robinson, Elihu Root, Jackson S. Shultz, Elliott F. Shepard, Gustavus Tuckerman, S. H. Wales, W. H. Webb.

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This list bears the names of at least two men who will be long remembered. There are also several others which were doubtless of more political value to the aspirant to office in 1881.

Just after the election Roosevelt wrote to his classmate, Charles G. Washburn:

> Too true, too true; I have become a "political hack." Finding it would not interfere much with my law, I accepted the nomination to the Assembly and was elected by 1500 majority, leading the ticket by 600 votes. But don't think I am going to go into politics after this year, for I am not.

Roosevelt's allusion to the law requires the statement that in the autumn of 1880 he had begun to read law in the office of his uncle, Robert Roosevelt; not that he had a strong leaning to the legal profession, but that he believed that every one, no matter how well off he might be, ought to be able to support himself by some occupation or profession. Also, he could not endure being idle, and he knew that the slight political work on which he embarked when he joined the Twenty-first District Republican Club would take but little of his time. During that first year out of college he established himself as a citizen, not merely politically, but socially. On his birthday in 1880 he married Miss Lee and they set up their home at 6 West Fifty-seventh Street; he joined social and literary clubs and ex-

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tended his athletic interests beyond wrestling and boxing to hunting, rifle practice, and polo.

His law studies seem to have absorbed him less than anything else that he undertook during all his life. He could not fail to be interested in them, but he never plunged into them with all his might and main as if he intended to make them his chief concern. For a while he had a desk in the office of the publishers, G. P. Putnam's Sons: but Major George Putnam recalls that he did little except suggest wonderful projects, which "had to be sat down upon." Already a love of writing infected him. Even before he left Harvard he had begun "A History of the Naval War of 1812," and this he worked on eagerly. The Putnams published it in 1882.

One incident of Roosevelt's canvass must not be overlooked. The Red Indians of old used to make their captives run the gauntlet between two lines of warriors: political bosses in New York in 1880 made their nominee run the gauntlet of all the saloonkeepers in their district. Accordingly, Jake Hess and Joe Murray proceeded to introduce Roosevelt to the rum-sellers of Sixth Avenue. The first they visited received Theodore with injudicious condescension almost as if he were a suppliant. He said he hoped that the young candidate, if elected, would treat the liquor men fairly, to which the "suppliant"

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replied that he intended to treat all interests fairly. The suggestion that liquor licenses were too high brought the retort that they were not high enough. Thereupon, the wary Hess and the discreet Joe Murray found an excuse for hurrying Roosevelt out of the saloon, and they told him that he had better look after his friends on Fifth Avenue and that they would look after the saloon-keepers on Sixth Avenue. That any decent candidate should have to pass in review before the saloon-keepers and receive their approval, is so monstrous as to be grotesque. That a possible President of the United States should be the victim needs no comment. It was thoroughly characteristic of Roosevelt that he balked at the first trial.

He says in his "Autobiography" that he was not conscious of going into politics to benefit other people, but to secure for himself a privilege to which every one was entitled. That privilege was self-government. When his "kid-glove" friends laughed at him for deliberately choosing to leap into the political mire, he told them that the governing class ought to govern, and that not they themselves but the bosses and "heelers" were the real governors of New York City. Not the altruistic desire to reform, but the perfectly practical resolve to enjoy the political rights to which he had a claim was his leading

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motive. It is important to understand this because it will explain much of his action as a statesman. Roosevelt is the greatest idealist in American public life since Lincoln; but his idealism, like Lincoln's, always had a firm, intelligent, practical footing.

Roosevelt himself thus describes his work during his first year in the New York Assembly:

> I paid attention chiefly while in the Legislature to laws for the reformation of Primaries and of the Civil Service and endeavored to have a certain Judge Westbrook impeached, on the ground of corrupt collusion with Jay Gould and the prostitution of his high judicial office to serve the purpose of wealthy and unscrupulous stock gamblers, but was voted down.

This brief statement gives no idea of either the magnitude or quality of his work in which, like young David, he went forth to smite Goliath, the Giant Corruption, entrenched for years in the Albany State House. I do not believe that in attacking the monster, Roosevelt thought that he was displaying unusual courage, much less that he was winning the crown of a moral hero. He simply saw a mass of abuse and wickedness which every decent person ought to repudiate. Most decent persons saw it, too, but convention, or self-interest, party affiliation, or unromantic, every-day cowardice, made them hold their tongues.

Being assigned to committees which had some

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of the most important concerns of New York City in charge, Roosevelt had the advantage given by his initiation into political methods as practiced in the Twenty-first District of knowing a little more than his colleagues knew about the local issues.

Three months of the session elapsed before he stood up in the Chamber and attacked point-blank one formidable champion of corruption. Listen to an anonymous writer in the *Saturday Evening Post:*

> It was on April 6, 1882, that Roosevelt took the floor in the Assembly and demanded that Judge Westbrook, of Newbury, be impeached. And for sheer moral courage that act is probably supreme in Roosevelt's life thus far. He must have expected failure. Even his youth and idealism and ignorance of public affairs could not blind him to the apparently inevitable consequences. Yet he drew his sword and rushed apparently to destruction — alone, and at the very outset of his career, and in disregard of the pleadings of his closest friends and the plain dictates of political wisdom.
>
> That speech — the deciding act in Roosevelt's career — is not remarkable for eloquence. But it is remarkable for fearless candor. He called thieves thieves, regardless of their millions; he slashed savagely at the Judge and the Attorney-General; he told the plain unvarnished truth as his indignant eyes saw it.[1]

Astonishment verging on consternation filled the Assemblymen, who, through long experience, were convinced that Truth was too precious to be exhibited in public. Worldly wisdom came to the aid

[1] Riis, 54–55.

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of the veteran Republican leader who wished to treat the assault as if it were the unripe explosion of youth. The callowness of his young friend must excuse him. He doubtless meant well, but his inexperience prevented him from realizing that many a reputation in public life had been shattered by just such loose charges. He felt sure that when the young man had time to think it over, he would modify his language. It would be fitting, therefore, for that body to show its kindliness by giving the new member from New York City leisure to think it over.

Little did this official defender of corruption understand Mr. Roosevelt, whose business it was then to uphold Right. That was a question in which expediency could have no voice. He regarded neither the harm he might possibly do to his political future nor to the standing of the Republican Party. I suspect that he smarted under the leader's attempt to treat him as a young man whose breaks instead of causing surprise must be condoned. Although the magnates of the party pleaded with him and urged him not to throw away his usefulness, he rose again in the Assembly next day and renewed his demand for an investigation of Judge Westbrook. Day after day he repeated his demand. The newspapers throughout the State began to give more and more

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attention to him. The public applauded, and the legislators, who had sat and listened to him with contemptuous indifference, heard from their constituents. At last, on the eighth day, by a vote of 104 to 6 the Assembly adopted Roosevelt's resolution and appointed an investigating committee. The evidence taken amply justified Roosevelt's charges, in spite of which the committee gave a whitewashing verdict. Nevertheless the "young reformer" had not only proved his case, but had suddenly made a name for himself in the State and in the Country.

Before his first term ended he discovered that there were enemies of honest government quite as dangerous as the open supporters of corruption. These were the demagogues who, under the pretense of attacking the wicked interests, introduced bills for the sole purpose of being bought off. Sly fellows they were and sneaks. Against their "strike" legislation Roosevelt had also to fight. His chief friend at Albany was Billy O'Neil, who kept a little cross-roads grocery up in the Adirondacks; had thought for himself on American politics; had secured his election to the Assembly without the favor of the Machine; and now acted there with as much independence as his young colleague of the Twenty-first District. Roosevelt remarks that the fact that two persons, sprung from such totally different sur-

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roundings, should come together in the Legislature was an example of the fine result which American democracy could achieve.

The session came to a close, and although Roosevelt had protested the year before that he was not going into politics as a career, he allowed himself to be renominated. Naturally, his desire to continue in and complete the task in which he had already accomplished much was whetted. He would have been a fool if he had not known, what every one else knew, that he had made a very brilliant record during his first year. A false standard which comes very near hypocrisy imposes a ridiculous mock modesty on great men in modern times: as if Shakespeare alone should be unaware that he was Shakespeare or that Napoleon or Darwin or Lincoln or Cavour should each be ignorant of his worth. Better vanity, if you will, than sham modesty. There was no harm done that Roosevelt at twenty-three felt proud of being recognized as a power in the Assembly. We must never forget also that he was a fighter, and that his first contests in Albany had so roused his blood that he longed to fight those battles to a finish, that is, to victory. We must make a distinction also in his motives. He did not strain every nerve to win a cause because it was his cause; but having adopted a cause which his heart and mind told him

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was good, he strove to make that cause triumph because he believed it to be good.

So he allowed himself to be renominated and he was reëlected by 2000 majority, although in that autumn of 1882 the Democratic candidate for Governor, Grover Cleveland, swept New York State by 192,000 and carried into office by the momentum of his success many of the minor candidates on the Democratic ticket.

The year 1883 opened with the cheer of dawn in New York politics. Cleveland, the young Governor of forty-four, had proved himself fearless, public-spirited, and conscientious. So had Roosevelt, the young Assemblyman of twenty-three. One was a Democrat, one a Republican, but they were alike in courage and in holding honesty and righteousness above their party platforms.

Roosevelt pursued in this session the methods which had made him famous and feared in the preceding. He admits that he may have had for a while a "swelled head," for in the chaos of conflicting principles and no-principles in which his life was thrown, he decided to act independently and to let his conscience determine his action on each question which arose. He flocked by himself on a peak. He was too practical, however, to hold this course long. Experience had already taught him that under a

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constitutional government parties which advocate or oppose issues must rule, and that in order to make your issues win you must secure a majority of the votes. Not by playing solitaire, therefore, not by standing aloof as one crying in the wilderness, but by honestly persuading as many as you could to support you, could you promote the causes which you had at heart. The professional politicians and the Machine leaders still thought that he was stubborn and too conceited to listen to reason, but in reality he had a few intimates like Billy O'Neil and Mike Costello with whom he took counsel, and a group of thirty or forty others, both Republican and Democratic, with whom he acted harmoniously on many questions.

They all united to fight the Black-Horse Cavalry, as the gang of "strike" legislators was called. One of the most insidious bills pushed by these rascals aimed at reducing the fares on the New York Elevated Railway from ten cents to five cents. It seemed so plausible! So entirely in the interest of the poor man! Indeed, the affairs of the Elevated took up much of Roosevelt's attention and enriched for years the Black-Horse Cavalrymen and the lobbyists. He also forced the Assembly to appoint a commission to investigate the New York City police officials, the police department being at that time

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notoriously corrupt. They employed as their counsel George Bliss, a lawyer of prominence, with a sharp tongue and a contempt for self-constituted reformers. While Roosevelt was cross-examining one of the officials, Bliss, who little understood the man he was dealing with, interrupted with a scornful and impertinent remark. "Of course you do not mean that, Mr. Bliss," said the young reformer with impressive politeness, "for if you did we should have to put you out in the street." Even in those early days, when Roosevelt was in dead earnest, he had a way of pointing his forefinger and of fixing his under jaw which the person whom he addressed could not mistake. That forefinger was as menacing as a seven-shooter. Mr. Bliss, with all the prestige of a successful career at the bar behind him, quickly understood the meaning of the look, the gesture, and the studied courtesy. He deemed it best to retract and apologize at once; and it was.

Roosevelt consented to run for a third term and he was elected in spite of the opposition of the various elements which united to defeat him. Such a man was too dangerous to be acceptable to Jay Gould and the "interests," to Black-Horse Cavalry, and to gangs of all kinds who made a living, directly or indirectly, by office-holding. His friends urged him for the speakership; but this was asking

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too much of the Democratic majority, and besides, there were Republicans who had winced under his scourge the year before and were glad enough to defeat him now. Occasionally, some kind elderly friend would still attempt to show him the folly of his ways, and we hear reports of one gentleman, a member of the Assembly and an "old friend," who told him that the great concern in life was Business, and that lawyers and judges, legislators and Congressmen, existed to serve the ends of Business. "There is no politics in politics," said this moral guide and sage. But he could not budge the young man, who believed that there are many considerations more important than the political.

During this third year, he made a straight and gallant fight to improve the condition under which cigars were made in New York City. By his own investigation, he found that the cigar-makers lived in tenements, in one room, perhaps two, with their families and often a boarder; these made the cigars which the public bought, in ignorance of the facts. Roosevelt proposed that, as a health measure which would benefit alike the cigar-makers and the public, this evil practice be prohibited and that the police put a stop to it. His bill passed in 1884, but the next year the Court of Appeals declared it unconstitutional, because it deprived the tenement-house

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people of their liberty and would injure the owners of the tenements if they were not allowed to rent their property to these tenants. In its decision, the court indulged in nauseating sanctimony of this sort: "It cannot be perceived how the cigar-maker is to be improved in his health, or his morals, by forcing him from his home and its hallowed associations and beneficent influences to ply his trade elsewhere." This was probably not the first time when Roosevelt was enraged to find the courts of justice sleekly upholding hot-beds of disease and vice, on the pretense that they were protecting liberty. Commenting on this episode, Mr. Washburn well says: "As applied to the kind of tenement I have referred to, this reference to the 'home and its hallowed associations' seems grotesque or tragic depending upon the point of view." [1]

Amid work of this kind, fighting and fearless, constantly adding to his reputation among the good as a high type of reformer, and adding to the detestation in which the bad held him, he completed his third term. He resolutely refused to serve again and declined the offers which were pressed upon him to run for Congress; but he accepted a place on the Republican National Committee.

The death of his mother on February 12, 1884,

[1] Washburn, 11.

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followed in twenty-four hours by that of his wife, who died after the birth of a daughter, brought sorrow upon Roosevelt which made the burden of his political work heavier and caused him to consider how he should readjust his life, for he was first of all a man of deep family affections and the loss of his wife left him adrift.

To S. N. D. North, editor of the *Utica Herald* and a well-wisher of his, he wrote from Albany on April 30, 1884:

DEAR MR. NORTH: I wish to write you a few words just to thank you for your kindness towards me, and to assure you that my head will *not* be turned by what I well know was a mainly accidental success. Although not a very old man, I have yet lived a great deal in my life, and I have known sorrow too bitter and joy too keen to allow me to become either cast down or elated for more than a very brief period over success or defeat.

I have very little expectation of being able to keep on in politics; my success so far has only been won by absolute indifference to my future career; for I doubt if any one can realize the bitter and venomous hatred with which I am regarded by the very politicians who at Utica supported me, under dictation from masters who were influenced by political considerations that were national and not local in their scope. I realize very thoroughly the absolutely ephemeral nature of the hold I have upon the people, and the very real and positive hostility I have excited among the politicians. I will not stay in public life unless I can do so on my own terms; and my ideal, whether lived up to or not, is rather a high one.

For very many reasons I will not mind going back into private life for a few years. My work this winter has been

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very harassing, and I feel both tired and restless; for the next few months I shall probably be in Dakota, and I think I shall spend the next two or three years in making shooting trips, either in the Far West or in the Northern woods — and there will be plenty of work to do writing.[1]

This letter is a striking revelation of the inmost intentions of the man of twenty-five, who already stood on a pinnacle where hard heads and mature might well have been dizzy. Evidently he knew himself, and even in his brief experience with the world he understood how uncertain and evanescent are the winds of Fame. If he had ever suffered from a "swelled head," he was now cured. He felt the emptiness of life's prizes when the dearest who should have shared them with him were dead.

[1] Douglas, 41–42.

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CHAPTER III

AT THE FIRST CROSSROADS

THE year 1884 was a Presidential year, and Roosevelt was one of the four delegates-at-large[1] of New York State to the Republican National Convention at Chicago. The day seemed to have come for a new birth in American politics. The Republican Party was grown fat with four and twenty years of power, and the fat had overlain and smothered its noble aims. The party was arrogant, it was corrupt, it was unashamed. After the War, immense projects involving huge sums of money had to be managed, and the Republicans spent like spendthrifts when they did not spend like embezzlers. I do not imply that the Democrats would not have done the same if they had been in command, or that there were not among them many who saw where their profit lay, and took it. The quadrupeds which feed at the Treasury trough are all of one species, no matter whether their skins be black or white.

But now a new generation was springing up, with

[1] The other delegates-at-large were President Andrew D. White of Cornell University, J. T. Gilbert, and Edwin Packard.

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its leaven of hope and idealism and its intuitive faith in honesty. More completely than any one else, Roosevelt embodied to the country the glorious promise of this new generation. But the old always dies hard after it has long been the blood and mind of a creed, a class, or a party. Terrible also is the blind, remorseless sweep of a custom which may have sprung up from good soil, not less than one spawned and nurtured in iniquity. Frankenstein laboriously constructing his monster seems to personify society at its immemorial task of creating institutions; each institution as it becomes viable rends its creator.

So the Republican Party lived on its traditions, its privileges, its appetites, its arrogance, and it refused to be transmuted by its youngest members. In 1876 it resorted to fraud to perpetuate its hold on power. Unchastened in 1880, three hundred and six of its delegates attempted through thick and thin to force the nomination of General Grant for a third term. The chief opposing candidate was James G. Blaine, whose unsavory reputation, however, caused the majority of the convention which was not pledged to Grant to repudiate Blaine and to choose Garfield as a compromise. Then followed four years of factional bitterness in the party, and when 1884 came round, Blaine's admirers pushed him to the front.

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Blaine himself was not a person of delicate instinct. The repudiation which he had twice suffered by the better element of the Republican Party, seemed only to redouble his determination to be its candidate. He had much personal magnetism. Both in his methods and ideals, he represented perfectly the politicians who during the dozen years after Lincoln's death flourished at Washington, and at every State capitol in the Union. By the luck of a catching phrase applied to him by Robert G. Ingersoll, he stood before the imagination of the country "as the plumèd knight," although on looking back we search in vain for any trait of knightliness or chivalry in him. For a score of years he filled the National Congress, House and Senate, with the bustle of his egotism. His knightly valor consisted in shaking his fist at the "Rebel Brigadiers" and in waving the "bloody shirt," feats which seemed to him heroic, no doubt, but which were safe enough, the Brigadiers being few and Blaine's supporters many. But where on the Nation's statute book do you find now a single important law fathered by him? What book contains one of his maxims for men to live by? Many persons still live who knew him, and remember him, but can any of them repeat a saying of his which passes current on the lips of Americans? So much sound and fury, so much

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intrigue and sophistry, and self-seeking, and now the silence of an empty sepulchre!

The better element of the Republican Party went to the Chicago Convention sworn to save the party from the disgrace of nominating Blaine. Roosevelt believed the charges against him, and by all that he had written and spoken, and by his political career, he was bound to oppose the politician, who, as Speaker of the National House, had, by the showing of his own letters, taken bribes from unscrupulous interests. In the convention, and in the committee meetings, and in the incessant parleys which prepare the work of a convention, Roosevelt fought unwaveringly against Blaine. The better element made Senator George F. Edmunds their candidate, and Roosevelt urged his nomination on all comers.

When the convention met, Mr. Lodge, of Massachusetts, nominated J. R. Lynch, a negro from Mississippi, to be temporary chairman, thereby heading off Powell Clayton, a veteran Republican "war-horse" and office-holder. Roosevelt had the honor — and it was an honor for so young a man — to make a speech, which proved to be effective, in Lynch's behalf; and when the vote was taken, Lynch was chosen by 424 to 384. This first victory over the Blaine Machine, the Edmunds men hailed as a good omen.

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Roosevelt was chairman of the New York State delegation. The whirling days and nights at Chicago confirmed his position as a national figure, but he strove in vain in behalf of honesty. The majority of the delegates would not be gainsaid. They had come to Chicago resolved to elect James G. Blaine, and no other, and they would not quit until they had accomplished this. Pleas for morality and for party concord fell on deaf ears, as did warnings of the comfort which Blaine's nomination would give to their enemies. His supporters packed the great convention hall, and when his name was put in nomination, there followed a riot of cheers, which lasted the better part of an hour, and foreboded his success.

As had been predicted, Blaine's nomination split the Republican Party. Many of the better element came out for Grover Cleveland, the Democratic candidate, who, as Governor of New York, had displayed unfailing courage, integrity, and intelligence. Others again, disgusted with many of the principles and leaders of both parties, formed themselves into a special group or party of Independents. They were hateful alike to the Bosses who controlled the Republican or Democratic organization; and Charles A. Dana, of the *New York Sun*, who took care never to be "on the side of the angels," derisively dubbed

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them "mugwumps" — a title which may carry an honorable meaning to posterity.

I was one of these Independents, and if I cite my own case, it is not because it was of any importance to the public, but because it was typical. During the days of suspense before the Chicago Convention met, the proposed nomination of Blaine weighed upon me like a nightmare. I would not admit to myself that so great a crime against American ideals could be committed by delegates who represented the standard of any political party, and were drawn from all over the country. I cherished, what seems to me now the sadly foolish dream, that with Roosevelt in the convention the abomination could not be done. I thought of him as of a paladin against whom the forces of evil would dash themselves to pieces. I thought of him as the young and dauntless spokesman of righteousness whose words would silence the special pleaders of iniquity. I wrote him and besought him to stand firm.

There followed the days of suspense when the newspapers brought news of the wild proceedings at the convention, and for me the shadow deepened. Then the telegraph reported Blaine's triumphant nomination. I waited, we all waited, to learn what the delegates who opposed him intended to do. One morning a dispatch in the *New York Tribune* an-

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nounced that Roosevelt would not bolt. That very day I had a little note from him saying that he had done his best in Chicago, that the result sickened him, that he should, however, support the Republican ticket; but he intended to spend most of the summer and autumn hunting in the West.

I was dumfounded. I felt as Abolitionists felt after Webster's Seventh of March speech. My old acquaintance, our trusted leader, whose career in the New York Assembly we had watched with an almost holy satisfaction, seemed to have strangely abandoned the fundamental principles which we and he had believed in, and he had so nobly upheld. Whittier's poem "Ichabod" seemed to have been aimed at him, especially in its third stanza:

> "Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
> When he who might
> Have lighted up and led his age,
> Falls back in night."

Amid the lurid gleams and heat of such a disappointment, men cannot see clearly. They impute wrong motives, base motives, to the backslider. In their wrath, they assume that only guilt can account for his defection.

We see plainly enough now that we misjudged Roosevelt. We assumed that because he was with us in the crusade for pure politics, he agreed with us in

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the estimate we put on party loyalty. Independents and mugwumps felt little reverence and set even less value on political parties, which we regarded simply as instruments to be used in carrying out policies. If a party pursued a policy contrary to our own, we left it as we should leave a train which we found going in the wrong direction. There was nothing sacred in a political party.

In assuming that Roosevelt must have coincided with us in these views, we did him wrong. For he held then, and had held since he first entered politics, that party transcended persons, and that only in the gravest case imaginable was one justified in bolting his party because one disapproved of its candidate. He did not respect Blaine; on the contrary, he regarded Blaine as a bad man: but he believed that the future of the country would be much safer under the control of the Republican Party than under the Democratic. This doctrine exposes its adherents to obvious criticism, if not to suspicion. It enables persons of callous consciences to support bad platforms and bad candidates without blushing; but after all, who shall say at what point you are justified in bolting your party? The decision must rest with the individual. And although it was hard for the bolting Independents in 1884 to accept the tenet that party transcends persons, it was

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Roosevelt's reason, and with him sincere. Some of his colleagues in the better element who had struggled as he had to defeat Blaine, and then, almost effusively, exalted Blaine as their standard-bearer, were less fortunate than he in having their sincerity doubted. George William Curtis, Carl Schurz, Charles Francis Adams, and other Independents of their intransigent temper formed a Mugwump Party and this turned the scale in electing Grover Cleveland President.

There used to be much discussion as to who persuaded Roosevelt, although he detested Blaine, to stand by the Republicans in 1884. Those were the days when very few of his critics understood that, in spite of his youth, he had already thought for himself on politics and had reached certain conclusions as to fundamental principles. These critics assumed that he must have been won over by Henry Cabot Lodge, with whom he had been intimate since his Harvard days, and who was supposed to be his political mentor. The truth is, however, that Roosevelt had formed his own opinion about bolting, and that he and Lodge, in discussing possibilities before they went to the Chicago Convention, had independently agreed that they must abide by the choice of the party there. They held, and a majority of men in similar position still hold, that delegates

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cannot in honor abandon the nominee chosen by the majority in a convention which they attend as delegates. If the rule, "My man, or nobody," were to prevail, there would be no use in holding conventions at all. And after that of 1884, George William Curtis, one of the chief leaders of the Independents, admitted that Roosevelt, in staying with the Republican Party, played the game fairly. While Curtis himself bolted and helped to organize the Mugwumps, Roosevelt, after his trip to the West, returned to New York and took a vigorous part in the campaign.

Nevertheless, Roosevelt's decision, in 1884, to cleave to the Republican Party disappointed many of us. We thought of him as a lost leader. Some critics in their ignorance were inclined to impute false motives to him; but in time, the cloud of suspicion rolled away and his action in that crisis was not laid up against him. The election of Cleveland relieved him of seeming perfunctorily to uphold Blaine.

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CHAPTER IV

NATURE THE HEALER

A PERFECT biography would show definitely the interaction between mind and body. At present we can only guess what this interaction may be. In some cases the relations are evident, but in most they are vague and often unsuspected. The psychologists, whose pretensions are so great and whose actual results are still so small, may perhaps lead, an age or two hence, to the desired knowledge. But the biographer of today must beware of adopting the unripe formulas of any immature science. Nevertheless, he must watch, study, and record all the facts pertaining to his subject, although he cannot explain them.

Theodore Roosevelt was a wonderful example of the partnership of mind and body, and any one who writes his biography in detail will do well to pay great heed to this intricate interlocking. I can do no more than allude to it here. We have seen that Roosevelt from his earliest days had a quick mind, happily not precocious, and a weak body which prevented him from taking part in normal physical activity and the play and sport of boy-

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hood. So his intellectual life grew out of scale to his physical. Then he set to work by the deliberate application of will-power to develop his body, and when he entered Harvard he was above the average youth in strength. Before he graduated, those who saw him box or wrestle beheld a fellow somewhat slim and light, but unusually well set up. During the succeeding four years he never allowed his duties as Assemblyman to encroach upon his exercise; on the contrary, he played regularly and he played hard, adding new kinds of sport to develop new faculties and to give the spice of variety. He rode to hounds with the Meadowbrook Hunt; he took up polo; and he boxed and wrestled as in his college days.

In a few years Roosevelt became physically a very powerful man. I recall my astonishment the first time I saw him, after the lapse of several years, to find him with the neck of a Titan and with broad shoulders and stalwart chest, instead of the city-bred, slight young friend I had known earlier. His body was now equal to any burden or strain which his mind might have to endure; and henceforth it is no idle fancy that suggests a perpetual competition between the two. Thanks to his extraordinary will, however, he never allowed his body to get control; but, as appetite comes with

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eating, so his strong and healthy muscles craved more and more exercise as he used them. And now he took a novel way to gratify them.

Ever since his first taste of camp life, when he went into the Maine Woods under the guidance of Bill Sewall and Will Dow, Roosevelt felt the lure of wild nature, and on many successive seasons he repeated these trips. Gradually, fishing and hunting in the wilderness of Maine or the Adirondacks did not afford him enough scope for his brimming vigor. He decided to go West, to the real West, where great game and Indians still survived, and the conditions of the few white men were almost as primitive as in the days of the earliest explorers. When the session of 1883 adjourned, he started for North Dakota, then a territory with a few settlers, and among the Bad Lands on the Little Missouri he bought an interest in two cattle ranches, the Chimney Butte and the Elkhorn. The following year, after the Presidential campaign which placed Cleveland in the White House, Roosevelt determined, as we saw in the letters I have quoted, to abandon the East for a time and to devote himself to a ranchman's life. He was still in deep grief at the loss of his wife and of his mother; there was no immediate prospect of usefulness for him in politics; the conventions of civilization, as he knew them in New

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York City, palled upon him; a sure instinct whispered to him that he must break away and seek health of body and heart and soul among the remote, unspoiled haunts of primeval Nature. For nearly two years, with occasional intervals spent in the East, the Elkhorn Ranch at Medora was his home, and he has described the life of the ranchman and cow-puncher in pages which are sure to be read as long as posterity takes any interest in knowing about the transition of the American West from wilderness to civilization. He shared in all the work of the ranch. He took with a "frolic welcome" the humdrum of its routine as well as its excitements and dangers. He says that he does not believe that there was ever any more attractive life for a vigorous young fellow than this, and assuredly no one else has glorified it as Roosevelt did with his pen.

At one time or another he performed all the duties of a ranchman. He went on long rides after the cattle, he rounded them up, he helped to brand them and to cut out the beeves destined for the Eastern market. He followed the herd when it stampeded during a terrific thunderstorm. In winter there was often need to save the wandering cattle from a sudden and deadly blizzard. The log cabin or "shack" in which he dwelt was rough, and so was the fare; comforts were few. He chopped the cottonwood which

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they used for fuel; he knew how to care for the ponies; and once at least he passed more than twenty-four hours in the saddle without sleep. According to the best standards, he says, he was not a fine horseman, but it is clear that he could do everything with a horse which had to be done, and that he never stopped from fatigue. When they needed fresh meat, he would shoot it. In short, he held his own under all the hardships and requirements demanded of a cowboy or ranchman.

To adapt himself to these wild conditions of nature and work was, however, only a part of his experience. Even more dangerous than pursuing a stampeding herd at night over the plains, and plunging into the Little Missouri after it, was intercourse with some of the lawless nomads of that pioneer region. Nomads they were, though they might settle down to work for a while on one ranch, and then pass on to another; the sort of creatures who loafed in the saloons of the little villages and amused themselves by running amuck and shooting up the town. These men, and indeed nearly all of the pioneers, held the man from the civilized East, the "tenderfoot," in scorn. They took it for granted that he was a weakling, that he had soft ideas of life and was stuck-up or affected. Now Roosevelt saw that in order to win their trust and respect, he must show

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himself equal to their tasks, a true comrade, who accepted their code of courage and honor. The fact that he wore spectacles was against him at the outset, because they associated spectacles with Eastern schoolmasters and incompetence. They called him "Four Eyes," at first with derision, but they soon discovered that in him they had no "tenderfoot" to deal with. He shot as well as the best of them; he rode as far; he never complained of food or tasks or hardship; he met every one on equal terms. Above all, he left no doubt as to his courage. He would not pick a quarrel nor would he avoid one. Many stories of his prowess circulated; mere heckling, or a practical joke, he took with a laugh; as when some of the men changed the saddle from his pony to a bucking broncho.

But he knew where to draw the line. At Medora, for instance, the Marquis de Mores, a French settler, assumed the attitude of a feudal proprietor. Having been the first to squat in that region he regarded those who came later as interlopers, and he and his men acted very sullenly. They even carried their ill-will and intimidation to the point of shooting. In due time the Marquis discovered cause for grievance against Roosevelt, and he sent him a letter warning the newcomer that if the cause were not removed the Marquis knew how one gentleman

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settles a dispute with another. Roosevelt despised dueling as a silly practice, which would not determine justice between disputants; but he knew that in Cowboy Land the duel, being regarded as a test of courage, must not be ignored by him. Any man who declined a challenge lost caste and had better leave the country at once. So Roosevelt within an hour dispatched a reply to the surly Marquis saying that he was ready to meet him at any time and naming the rifle, at twelve paces' distance, as the weapon that he preferred. The Marquis, a formidable swordsman but no shot, sent back word, expressing regret that Mr. Roosevelt had mistaken his meaning: in referring to "gentlemen knowing how to settle disputes," he meant that of course an amicable explanation would restore harmony. Thenceforward, he treated Roosevelt with effusive courtesy. Perhaps a chill ran down his back at the thought of standing up before an antagonist twelve paces away and that the fighters were to advance towards each other three paces after each round, until one of them was killed.

So Theodore fought no duel with either the French Marquis or with any one else during his life in the West, but he had several encounters with local desperadoes. One cold night in winter, having ridden far and knowing that he could reach no refuge for

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many hours, he unexpectedly saw a light. Going towards it, he found that it came from a cabin which served as saloon and tavern. On entering, he saw a group of loafers and drinkers who were apparently terrorized by a big fellow, rather more than half drunk, who proved to be the local bully. The function of this person was to maintain his bullyship against all comers: accordingly, he soon picked on Roosevelt, who held his peace as long as he could. Then the rowdy, who grasped his pistols in his hands, ordered the "four-eyed tenderfoot" to come to the bar and set up drinks for the crowd. Roosevelt walked deliberately towards him, and before the bully suspected it, the "tenderfoot" felled him with a sledgehammer blow. In falling, a pistol went off wide of its mark, and the bully lay in a faint. Before he could recover, Roosevelt stood over him ready to pound him again. But the bully did not stir, and he was carried off into another room. The crowd congratulated the stranger on having served him right.

At another place, there was a "bad man" who surpassed the rest of his fellows in using foul language. Roosevelt, who loathed obscenity as he did any other form of filth, tired of this bad man's talk and told him very calmly that he liked him but not his nastiness. Instead of drawing his gun, as the by-

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standers thought he would do, Jim looked sheepish, acknowledging the charge, and changed his tone. He remained a loyal friend of his corrector.

Cattle-thieves and horse-thieves infested the West of those days. To steal a ranchman's horse might not only cause him great annoyance, but even put his life in danger, and accordingly the rascals who engaged in this form of crime ranked as the worst of all and received no mercy when they were caught. If the sheriff of the region was lax, the settlers took the matter into their own hands, enrolled themselves as vigilantes, hunted the thieves down, hanged those whom they captured, and shot at sight those who tried to escape. It happened that the sheriff, in whose jurisdiction Medora lay, allowed so many thieves to get off that he was suspected of being in collusion with them. The ranchmen held a meeting at which he was present and Roosevelt told him in very plain words their complaint against him and their suspicions. Though he was a hot-tempered man, and very quick on the trigger, he showed no willingness to shoot his bold young accuser; he knew, of course, that the ranchmen would have taken vengeance on him in a flash, but it is also possible that he recognized the truth of Roosevelt's accusation and felt compunctions.

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Some time later Roosevelt showed how a zealous officer of the law — he was the acting deputy sheriff — ought to behave. He had a boat in which he used to cross the Little Missouri to his herds on the other side. One day he missed the boat, its rope having been cut, and he inferred that it must have been stolen by three cattle-thieves who had been operating in that neighborhood. By means of it they could easily escape, for there was no road along the river on which horsemen could pursue them. Notwithstanding this, Roosevelt resolved that they should not go free. In three days Bill Sewall and Dow built a flat, water-tight craft, on which they put enough food to last for a fortnight, and then all three started downstream. They had drifted and poled one hundred and fifty miles or more, before they saw a faint column of smoke in the bushes near the bank. It proved to be the temporary camp of the fugitives, whom they quickly took prisoners, put into the boat, and carried another one hundred and fifty miles down the river to the nearest town with a jail and a court. Going and coming, Roosevelt spent nearly three weeks, not to mention the hardships which he and his trusty men suffered on the way; but he had served Justice, and Justice must be served at any cost. When the story became known, the admiration of his neighbors for

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his pluck and persistence rose; but they wondered why he took the trouble to make the extra journey, in order to deliver the prisoners to the jail, instead of shooting them where he overtook them.

I chronicle these examples of Roosevelt's courage among the lawless gangs with whom he was thrown in North Dakota, because they reveal several qualities which came to be regarded as peculiarly Rooseveltian during the rest of his days. We are apt to speak of "mere" physical courage as being inferior to moral courage; and doubtless there are many heroes unknown to the world who, under the torture of disease or the poignancy of social injustice and wrongs, deserve the highest crown of heroism. Men who would lead a charge in battle would shrink from denouncing an accepted convention or even from slighting a popular fashion. But after all, the instinct of the race is sound in revering those who give their lives without hesitation or regret at the point of deadly peril, or offer their own to save the lives of others.

Roosevelt's experience established in him that physical courage which his soul had aspired to in boyhood, when the consciousness of his bodily inferiority made him seem shy and almost timid. Now he had a bodily frame which could back up any resolution he might take. The emergencies in a ranch-

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man's career also trained him to be quick to will, instantaneous in his decisions, and equally quick in the muscular activity by which he carried them out. In a community whose members gave way to sudden explosions of passion, you might be shot dead unless you got the drop on the other fellow first. The anecdotes I have repeated, indicate that Roosevelt must often have outsped his opponent in drawing.

We learn from them, too, that he was far from being the pugnacious person whom many of his later critics insisted that he was. Having given ample proof to the frontiersmen that he had no fear, he resolutely kept the peace with them, and they had no desire to break peace with him. Bluster and swagger were foreign to his nature, and he loathed a bully as much as a coward. If we had not already had the record of his three years in the Legislature, in which he surprised his friends by his wonderful talent for mixing with all sorts of persons, we might marvel at his ability to meet the cowboys and ranchmen, and even the desperadoes, of the Little Missouri on equal terms, to win the respect of all of them, and the lifelong devotion of a few. They knew that the usual tenderfoot, however much he might wish to fraternize, was fended from them by his past, his traditions, his civilized life, his instincts; but in Roosevelt's case, there was no gulf, no barrier.

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Even after he became President of the United States, I can no more imagine that he felt embarrassment in meeting any one, high or low, than that he scrutinized the coat on a man's back in order to know how to treat him.

To have gained solid health, to have gained mastery of himself, and to have put his social nature to the severest test and found it flawless, were valid results of his life on the Elkhorn Ranch. It imparted to him also a knowledge which was to prove most precious to him in the unforeseen future. For it taught him the immense diversity of the people, and consequently of the interests, of the United States. It gave him a national point of view, in which he perceived that the standards and desires of the Atlantic States were not all-inclusive or final. Yet while it impressed on him the importance of geographical considerations, it impressed, more deeply still, the fact that there are moral fundamentals not to be measured by geography, or by time, or by race. Lincoln learned this among the pioneers of Illinois; in similar fashion Roosevelt learned it in the Bad Lands of Dakota with their pioneers and exiles from civilization, and from studying the depths of his own nature.

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CHAPTER V

BACK TO THE EAST AND LITERATURE

ONE September day in 1886, Roosevelt was reading a New York newspaper in his Elkhorn cabin, when he saw that he had been nominated by a body of Independents as candidate for Mayor of New York City. Whether he had been previously consulted or not, I do not know, but he evidently accepted the nomination as a call, for he at once packed up his things and started East. The political situation in the metropolis was somewhat abnormal. The United Democracy had nominated for Mayor Abram S. Hewitt, a merchant of high standing, one of those decent persons whom Tammany Hall puts forward to attract respectable citizens when it finds itself in a tight place and likely to be defeated. At such a pinch, Tammany even politely keeps in the background and allows it to appear that the decent candidate is wholly the choice of decent Democrats: for the Tammany Tiger wears, so to speak, a reversible skin which, when turned inside out, shows neither stripes nor claws. Mr. Hewitt's chief opponent was Henry George, put up by the United Labor Party, which had suddenly

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swelled into importance, and had discovered in the author of "Progress and Poverty" and in the advocate of the Single Tax a candidate whose private character was generally respected, even by those who most hated his economic teachings. The mere thought that such a Radical should be proposed for Mayor scared, not merely the Big Interests, but the owners of real estate and intangible property.

Against these redoubtable competitors, the Independents and Republicans pitted Roosevelt, hoping that his prestige and personal popularity would carry the day. He made a plucky campaign, but Hewitt won, with Henry George second. In his letter of acceptance he went straight at the mark, which was that the government of the city was strictly a business affair. "I very earnestly deprecate," he says, "all attempts to introduce any class or caste feeling into the mayoralty contest. Laborers and capitalists alike are interested in having an honest and economical city government, and if elected I shall certainly strive to be the representative of all good citizens, paying heed to nothing whatever but the general well-being."[1] When Tammany reverses its hide, the Republicans in New York City need not expect victory; and in 1886 Henry

[1] Riis, 101.

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George drew off a good many votes which would ordinarily have been cast for Roosevelt.

Nevertheless, the fight was worth making. It reintroduced him to the public, which had not heard him for two years, and it helped erase from men's memories the fact that he had supported Blaine in 1884. His contest with Hewitt and George set him in his true light — a Republican by conviction, a party man, also by conviction, but above all the fearless champion of what he believed to be the right, in its struggle against economic heresy and political corruption.

The election over, Roosevelt went to Europe, and on December 2, 1886, at St. George's, Hanover Square, London, he married Miss Edith Kermit Carow, of New York, whom he had known since his earliest childhood, the playmate of his sister Corinne, the little girl whose photograph had stirred up in him "homesickness and longings for the past," when he was a little boy in Paris. Cecil Spring-Rice, an old friend (subsequently British Ambassador at Washington), was his groomsman, and being married at St. George's, Theodore remarks, "made me feel as if I were living in one of Thackeray's novels."

Mrs. Roosevelt's father came of Huguenot stock, the name being originally Quéreau; the first French

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immigrants of the family having migrated to New York in the seventeenth century at about the same time as Claes van Roosevelt. Like the Roosevelts, the Carows had so freely intermarried with English stock in America that the French origin of one was as little discernible in their descendants as was the Dutch origin of the other. Through her American line Mrs. Roosevelt traced back to Jonathan Edwards, the prolific ancestor of many persons who emerged above the common level by either their virtue or their badness.

After spending several months in Europe, Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt returned and settled at Oyster Bay, Long Island, where he had built, not long before, a country house on Sagamore Hill. His place there comprised many acres — a beautiful country of hill and hollow and fine tall trees. The Bay made in from Long Island Sound and seemed to be closed by the opposite shore, so that in calm weather you might mistake it for a lake. This home was thoroughly adapted for Roosevelt's needs. Being only thirty miles from New York, with a railroad near by, convenient but not intrusive, it gave easy access to the city, but was remote enough to discourage casual or undesired callers. It had sufficient land to carry on farming and to sustain the necessary horses and domestic cattle. Mrs. Roosevelt supervised it; he

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simply loved it and got distraction from his more pressing affairs; if he had chosen to withdraw from these he might have devoted himself to the pleasing and leisurely life of a gentleman farmer.

For a while his chief occupation was literary. Into this he pitched with characteristic energy. His innate craving for self-expression could never be satiated by speaking alone, and now, since he filled no public position which would be a cause or perhaps an excuse for speaking, he wrote with all the more enthusiasm.

Although he was less than seven years out of college, his political career had given him a national reputation, which helped and was helped by the vogue of his writings. The American public had come to perceive that Theodore Roosevelt could do nothing commonplace. The truth was, that he did many things that other men did which ceased to be commonplace only when he did them. Scores of other young men went on hunting trips after big game in the Rockies or the Selkirks, and even ranching had been engaged in by the enterprising and the adventurous, who hoped to find it a short way to a fortune. But whether as ranchman or as hunter, Roosevelt was better known than all the rest. His skill in describing his experiences no doubt largely accounted for this; but the fact

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that the experiences were *his*, was the ultimate explanation.

Roosevelt began to write very early. He thought that the instruction in rhetoric which he received at Harvard enlightened him, and during his Senior year he began the "History of the Naval War of 1812," which he completed and published in 1882. This work at once won recognition for him, and it differed from the traditional accounts, embedded in the school histories of the United States, in doing full justice to the British naval operations. Probably, for the first time, our people realized that the War of 1812 had not been a series of victories, startling and irresistible, for the American Navy. Nearly ten years later, Roosevelt in the "Winning of the West" made his second excursion into history. These volumes, which eventually numbered six, are regarded by experts in the subject as of great value, and I suppose that in them Roosevelt did more than any other writer to popularize the study of the historical origin and development of the vast region west of the Alleghanies which now forms a vital part of the American Republic. One attribute of a real historian is the power to discern the structural or pregnant quality of historic periods and episodes; and this power Roosevelt displayed in choosing both the War of 1812 and the Winning of the West.

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In his larger history Roosevelt had a swift, energetic, and direct style. He never lacked for ideas. Descriptions came to him with exuberant details of which he selected enough to leave his reader with the feeling that he had looked on a vivid and accurate picture. Here, for instance, is a portrait of Daniel Boon which seems remarkably lifelike, because I remember how difficult other writers find it to individualize most of the figures of the pioneers.

The backwoodsmen, he says, "all tilled their own clearings, guiding the plow among the charred stumps left when the trees were chopped down and the land burned over, and they were all, as a matter of course, hunters. With Boon, hunting and exploration were passions, and the lonely life of the wilderness, with its bold, wild freedom, the only existence for which he really cared. He was a tall, spare, sinewy man, with eyes like an eagle's, and muscles that never tired; the toil and hardship of his life made no impress on his iron frame, unhurt by intemperance of any kind, and he lived for eighty-six years, a backwoods hunter to the end of his days. His thoughtful, quiet, pleasant face, so often portrayed, is familiar to every one; it was the face of a man who never blustered or bullied, who would neither inflict nor suffer any wrong, and who had a limitless fund of fortitude, endurance, and indomit-

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able resolution upon which to draw when fortune proved adverse. His self-command and patience, his daring, restless love of adventure, and, in time of danger, his absolute trust in his own powers and resources, all combined to render him peculiarly fitted to follow the career of which he was so fond."[1]

Roosevelt contributed two volumes to the American Statesmen Series, one on Thomas Hart Benton in 1886, and the other on Gouverneur Morris in 1887. The environment and careers of these two men — the Missouri Senator of the first half of the nineteenth century, and the New York financier of the last half of the eighteenth — afforded him scope for treating two very diverse subjects. He was himself rooted in the old New York soil and he had come, through his life in the West, to divine the conditions of Benton's days. Once again, many years later (1900) he tried his hand at biography, taking Oliver Cromwell for his hero, and making a summary, impressionistic sketch of him. Besides the interest this biography has for students of Cromwell, it has also interest for students of Roosevelt, for it is a specimen of the sort of by-products he threw off in moments of relaxation.

More characteristic than such excursions into history and biography, however, are his many books

[1] *Winning of the West*, I, 137, 138 (ed. 1889).

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describing ranch life and hunting. In the former, he gives you truthful descriptions of the men of the West as he saw them, and in the latter he recounts his adventures with elk and buffalo, wolves and bears. The mere trailing and killing of these creatures do not satisfy him. He studies with equal zest their haunts and their habits. The naturalist in him, which we recognized in his youth, found this vent in his maturity. And long years afterward, on his expeditions to Africa and to Brazil he dealt even more exuberantly with the natural history of the countries which he visited.

Two other classes of writings make up Roosevelt's astonishing output. He gathered his essays and addresses into half a dozen volumes, remarkable alike for the wide variety of their subjects, and for the vigor with which he seized on each subject as if it was the one above all others which most absorbed him. Finally, skim the collection of his official messages, as Commissioner, as Governor, or as President, and you will discover that he had the gift of infusing life and color into the usually drab and cheerless wastes of official documents.

I am not concerned to make a literary appraisal of Theodore Roosevelt's manifold works, but I am struck by the fact that our professional critics ignore him entirely in their summaries or histories of

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recent American literature. As I re-read, after twenty years, and in some cases after thirty years, books of his which made a stir on their appearance, I am impressed, not only by the excellence of their writing, but by their lasting quality. If he had not done so many other things of greater importance, and done them supremely, he would have secured lasting fame by his books on hunting, ranching, and exploration. No other American compares with him, and I know of no other, in English at least, who has made a contribution in these fields equal to his.

Throughout these eight or ten volumes he proves himself to be one of those rare writers who see what they write. As in the case of Tennyson, than whom no English poet, in spite of nearsightedness, has observed so minutely the tiniest details of form or the faintest nuance of color, so the lack of normal vision did not prevent Roosevelt from being the closest of observers. He was also, by the way, a good shot with rifle or pistol. If you read one of his chapters in "Hunting the Grizzly" and ask yourself wherein its animation and attraction lie, you will find that it is because every sentence and every line report *things seen*. He does not, like the Realist, try to get a specious lifelikeness by heaping up banal and commonplace facts; he selects. His imagination reminds one of the traveling spark which used

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to run along the great chandelier in the theatre, and light each jet, so that its passage seemed a flight from point to point of brilliance. Wherever he focuses his survey a spot glows vividly.

The eye, the master sense of the mind, thus dominates him, and I think that we shall trace to its mastery much of the immediate power which he exerted by his writings and speeches on public, social, and moral topics. He struck off, in the heat of composition or of speaking, phrases and similes which millions caught up eagerly and made as familiar as household words. He even remembered from his extensive reading some item which, when applied by him to the affair of the moment, acquired new pertinence and a second life. Thus, Bunyan's "muckraker" lives again; thus, "the curse of Meroz," and many another Bible reference, springs up with a fresh meaning.

No doubt the purist will find occasional lapses in taste or expression, and the quibbling peddler of rhetoric will gloat over some doubtful construction; but neither purist nor peddler of rhetoric has ever been able in his writing to display the ease, the rush, the naturalness, the sparkle which were as genuine in Roosevelt as were the features of his face. On reading these pages, which have escaped the attention of the professional critics, I wonder

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whether they may not have a fate similar to Defoe's; for Defoe also was read voraciously by his contemporaries, his pamphlets made a great rustle in their time, and then the critics turned to other and spicier writers. But in due season, other critics, as well as the world, made the discovery that only a genius could have produced Defoe's "every-day," "commonplace" style.

His innate vigor, often swelling into vehemence, marks also Roosevelt's political essays, and yet he had time for reflection, and if you examine closely even some of his combative passages, you will see that they do not spring from sudden anger or scorn, but from a conviction which has matured slowly in him. He had not the philosophic calm which formed the background of Burke's political masterpieces, but he had the clearness, the simplicity, by which he could drive home his thoughts into the minds of the multitude. Burke spoke and wrote for thousands and for posterity; Roosevelt addressed millions for the moment, and let posterity do what it would with his burning appeals and invectives. He was not so absolutely self-effacing as Lincoln, but I think that he realized to the full the meaning of Lincoln's phrase, "the world will little note, nor long remember what we may say here," and that he would have made it his motto. For he, like

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all truly great statesmen, was so immensely concerned in winning today's battle, that he wasted no time in speculating what tomorrow, or next year, or next century would say about it.

Mysticism, the recurrent fad which indicates that its victims neither see clear nor think straight, could not spread its veils over him. The man who visualizes is safe from that intellectual weakness and moral danger. But although Roosevelt felt the sway of the true emotions, he allowed only his intimates to know what he held most intimate and sacred. He felt also the charm of beauty, and over and over again in his descriptions of hunting and riding in the West, he pauses to recall beautiful scenery or some unusual bit of landscape; and even in remembering his passage down the River of Doubt, when he came nearer to death than he ever came until he died, in spite of tormenting pain and desperate anxiety for his companions, he mentions more than once the loveliness of the river scene or of the massed foliage along its banks. Naturalist though he was, bent first on studying the habits of birds and animals, he yet took keen delight in the iridescent plumage or graceful form or the beautiful fur of bird and beast.

The quality of a writer can best be judged by reading a whole chapter, or two or three, of his book,

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but sometimes he reveals a phase of himself in a single paragraph. Read, for instance, this brief extract from Roosevelt's "Through the Brazilian Wilderness," if you would understand some of the traits which I have just alluded to. It comes at the end of his long and dismaying exploration of the River of Doubt, when the party was safe at last, and the terrible river was about to flow into the broad, lakelike Amazon, and Manaos was almost in sight, where civilization could be laid hold on again, Manaos, whence the swift ships went steaming towards the Atlantic and the Atlantic opened a clear path home. He says:

> The North was calling strongly the three men of the North — Rocky Dell Farm to Cherrie, Sagamore Hill to me; and to Kermit the call was stronger still. After nightfall we could now see the Dipper well above the horizon — upside down with the two pointers pointing to a North Star below the world's rim; but the Dipper, with all its stars. In our home country spring had now come, the wonderful Northern spring of long, glorious days, of brooding twilight, of cool, delightful nights. Robin and bluebird, meadow-lark and song-sparrow were singing in the mornings at home; the maple buds were red; windflowers and bloodroot were blooming while the last patches of snow still lingered; the rapture of the hermit-thrush in Vermont, the serene golden melody of the wood-thrush on Long Island, would be heard before we were there to listen. Each was longing for the homely things that were so dear to him, for the home people who were dearer still, and for the one who was dearest of all.[1]

[1] *Through the Brazilian Wilderness*, 320.

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CHAPTER VI

APPLYING MORALS TO POLITICS

I HAVE said that Roosevelt devoted the two years after he came back to New York to writing, but it would be a mistake to imagine that writing alone busied him. He was never a man who did or would do only one thing at a time. His immense energy craved variety, and in variety he found recreation. Now that the physical Roosevelt had caught up in relative strength with the intellectual, he could take what holidays requiring exhaustless bodily vigor he chose. The year seldom passed now when he did not go West for a month or two. Bill Sewall and Wilmot Dow were established with their families on the Elkhorn Ranch, which Roosevelt continued to own, although, I believe, like many ranches at that period, it ceased to be a good investment. Sometimes he made a hurried dash to southern Texas, or to the Selkirks, or to Montana in search of new sorts of game. In the mountains he indulged in climbing, but this was not a favorite with him because it offered less sport in proportion to the fatigue. While he was still a young man he had gone up the Matterhorn and Mont Blanc, feats which

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still required endurance, although they did not involve danger.

While we think of him, therefore, as dedicating himself to his literary work — the "Winning of the West" and the accounts of ranch life — we must remember that he had leisure for other things. He watched keenly the course of politics, for instance, and in 1888 when the Republicans nominated Benjamin Harrison as their candidate for President, Roosevelt supported him effectively and took rank with the foremost Republican speakers of the campaign. After his election Harrison, who both recognized Roosevelt's great ability and felt under obligation to him, wished to offer him the position of an under-secretary in the State Department; but Blaine, who was slated for Secretary of State, had no liking for the young Republican whose coolness in 1884 he had not forgotten. So Harrison invited Roosevelt to be a Civil Service Commissioner. The position had never been conspicuous; its salary was not large; its duties were of the routine kind which did not greatly tax the energies of the Commissioners, who could never hope for fame, but only for the approval of their own consciences for whatever good work they did. The Machine Republicans, whether of national size, or of State or municipal, were glad to know that Roosevelt would be put out of the way in that office.

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They already thought of him as a young man dangerous to all Machines and so they felt the prudence of bottling him up. To make him a Civil Service Commissioner was not exactly so final as chloroforming a snarling dog would be, but it was a strong measure of safety. Theodore's friends, on the other hand, advised him against accepting the appointment, because, they said, it would shelve him, politically, use up his brains which ought to be spent on higher work, and allow the country which was just beginning to know him to forget his existence. Men drop out of sight so quickly at Washington unless they can stand on some pedestal which raises them above the multitude.

The Optimist of the future, to hasten whose coming we are all making the world so irresistibly attractive, will be endowed, let us hope, with a sense of humor. With that, he can read history as a cosmic joke-book, and not as the Biography of the Devil, as many of us moderns, besides Jean Paul, have found it. How long it has taken, and how much blood has been spilt before this or that most obvious folly has been abolished! With what absurd tenacity have men flown in the face of reason and flouted common sense! So our Optimist, looking into the conditions which made Civil Service Reform imperative, will shed tears either of pity or of laughter.

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As long ago as the time of the cave-dweller, who was clothed in shaggy hair instead of in broadcloth or silk, prehistoric man learned that the best arrow or spear was that tipped with the best piece of flint. In brief, to do good work, you must have good tools. Translated into the terms of today, this means that the expert or specialist must be preferred to the untrained. In nearly all walks of life this truth was taken for granted, except in affairs connected with government and administration. A President might be elected, not because he was experienced in these matters, but because he had won a battle, or was the compromise candidate between two other aspirants. As it was with Presidents, so with the Cabinet officers, Congressmen, and State and city officials. Fitness being ignored as a qualification to office, made it easy for favoritism and selfish motives to determine the appointment of the army of employees required in the bureaus and departments. That good old political freebooter, Andrew Jackson, merely put into words what his predecessors had put into practice: "To the victors belong the spoils." And since his time, more than one upright and intelligent theorist on government has supported the Party System even to the point where the enjoyment of the spoils by the victors seems justified.

The "spoils" were the salaries paid to the lower

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grade of placemen and women — salaries usually not very large, but often far above what those persons could earn in honest competition. As the money came out of the public purse, why worry? And how could party enthusiasm during the campaign and at the polls be kept up, if some of the partisans might not hope for tangible rewards for their services? Many rich men sat in Congress, and the Senate became, proverbially, a millionaires' club. But not one of these plutocrats conducted the private business which made him rich by the methods to which he condemned the business administration of the government. He did not fill his counting-room with shirkers and incompetents; he did not find sinecures for his wife's poor relations; he did not pad his payroll with parasites whose characteristics were an itching palm and an unconquerable aversion to work. He knew how to select the quickest, cleverest, most industrious assistants, and through them he prospered.

That a man who had sworn to uphold and direct his government to the best of his ability, should have the conscience to treat his country as he did not treat himself, can be easily explained: he had no conscience. Fashion, like a local anæsthetic, deadens the sensitiveness of conscience in this or that spot; and the prevailing fashion under all governments,

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autocratic or democratic, has permitted the waste and even the dishonest application of public funds.

These anomalies at last roused the sense of humor of some of our citizens, just as the injustice and dishonesty which the system embodied roused the moral sense of others; and the Reform of the Civil Service — a dream at first, and then a passionate cause which the ethical would not let sleep — came into being. But to the politicians of the old type, the men of "inflooence" and "pull," the project seemed silly. They ridiculed it, and they expected to make it ridiculous in the eyes of the American people, by calling it "Snivel" Service Reform. Zealots, however, cannot be silenced by mockery. The contention that fitness should have something to do in the choice of public servants was effectively confirmed by the scientific departments of the government. The most shameless Senator would not dare to propose his brother's widow to lead an astronomical expedition, or to urge the appointment of the ward Boss of his city as Chairman of the Coast Survey. So the American people perceived that there were cases in which the Spoils System did not apply. The reformers pushed ahead; Congress at last took notice, and a law was passed bringing a good many appointees in the Post-Office and other departments under the Merit System. The movement then gained

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ground slowly and the spoilsmen began to foresee that if it spread to the extent which seemed likely, it would deprive them of much of their clandestine and corrupting power. Senator Roscoe Conkling, one of the wittiest and most brazen of these, remarked, that when Dr. Johnson told Boswell that "patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel," he had not sounded the possibilities of "reform."

The first administration of President Cleveland, who was a great, irremovable block of stubbornness in whatever cause he thought right, gave invaluable help to this one. The overturn of the Republican Party, after it had held power for twenty-four years, entailed many changes in office and in all classes of office-holders. Cleveland had the opportunity, therefore, of applying the Merit System as far as the law had carried it, and his actions gave Civil Service Reformers much though not complete satisfaction. The movement was just at the turning-point when Roosevelt was appointed Commissioner in 1889. Under listless or timid direction it would have flagged and probably lost much ground; but Roosevelt could never do anything listlessly and whatever he pushed never lost ground.

The Civil Service Commission appointed by President Harrison consisted of three members, of whom the President was Charles Lyman, with

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Roosevelt and Hugh Thompson, an ex-Confederate soldier, for his colleagues. I do not disparage Messrs. Lyman and Thompson when I say that they were worthy persons who did not claim to have an urgent call to reform the Civil Service, or anything else. They were not of the stuff which leads revolts or reforms, but rather of that convenient class, which still can be met in Washington, of men available for any respectable office which does not involve any special knowledge or zeal. In a very short time the Commission, Congress, and the public learned that it was Roosevelt, the youngest member, just turned thirty years of age, who steered the Commission. Hostile critics would say, of course, that he usurped the leadership; but I think that this is inaccurate. It was not his conceit or ambition, it was destiny working through him, which made where he sat the head of the table. Being tremendously interested in this cause and incomparably abler than Lyman or Thompson, he naturally did most of the work, and his decisions shaped their common policy. The appeal to his sense of humor and his sense of justice stimulated him, and being a man who already saw what large consequences sometimes flow from small causes he must have been buoyed up by the thought that any of the cases which came before him might set a very important precedent.

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Roosevelt acted on the principle that the office-holder who swears to carry out a law must do this without hesitation or demur. If the law is good, enforcing it will make its goodness apparent to everybody; if it is bad, it will become the more quickly odious and need to be repealed. Roosevelt enforced the Civil Service Law with the utmost rigor. It called for the examination of candidates for office, and the examiners paid some heed to their moral fitness. Its opponents tried to stir up public opinion against it by circulating what purported to be some of its examination papers. Why, they asked, should a man who wished to be a letter-carrier in Keokuk, be required to give a list of the Presidents of the United States? Or what was the shortest route for a letter going from Bombay to Yokohama? By these and similar spurious questions the spoilsmen hoped to get rid of the reformers. But "shrewd slander," as Roosevelt called it, could not move him.

Two specimen cases will suffice to show how he reduced shrewd slanderers to confusion.

The first was Charles Henry Grosvenor, an influential Republican Congressman from Ohio, familiarly known as the "Gentle Shepherd of Ohio," because of his efforts to raise the tariff on wool for the benefit of the owners of the few thousand sheep in that State.

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A Congressional Committee was investigating the Civil Service Commission and Roosevelt asked that Grosvenor, who had attacked it, might be summoned. Grosvenor, however, did not appear, but when he learned that Roosevelt was going to his Dakota ranch for a vacation, he sent word that he would come. Nevertheless, this gallant act failed to save him, for Roosevelt canceled his ticket West, and confronted Grosvenor at the investigation. The Gentle Shepherd protested that he had never said that he wished to repeal the Civil Service Law; whereupon Roosevelt read this extract from one of his speeches: "I will vote not only to strike out this provision, but I will vote to repeal the whole law." When Roosevelt pointed out the inconsistency of the two statements, Grosvenor declared that they meant the same thing.

Being caught thus by one foot in Roosevelt's man-trap, he quickly proceeded to be caught by the other. He declared that Rufus P. Putnam, one of the candidates in dispute, had never lived in Grosvenor's Congressional district, or even in Ohio. Then Mr. Roosevelt quoted from a letter written by Grosvenor: "Mr. Rufus P. Putnam is a legal resident of my district, and has relatives living there now." With both feet caught in the man-trap, the Gentle Shepherd was suffering much pain, but Truth is so

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great a stranger to spoilsmen that he found difficulty in getting within speaking distance of her. For he protested, first, that he never wrote the letter, next, that he had forgotten that he wrote it, and finally, that he was misinformed when he wrote it. So far as appears, he never risked a tilt with the smiling young Commissioner again, but returned to his muttons and their fleeces.

A still more distinguished personage fell before the enthusiastic Commissioner. This was Arthur Pue Gorman, a Senator from Maryland, a Democrat, one of the most pertinacious agents of the Big Interests in the United States Congress. Evidently, also, he served them well, as they kept him in the Senate for nearly twenty-five years, until his death. They employed Democrats as well as Republicans, just as they subscribed to both Democratic and Republican campaign funds. For, "in politics there is no politics." Gorman, who knew that the Spoils System was almost indispensable to the running of a political machine, waited for a chance to attack the Civil Service Commission. Thinking that the propitious moment had come, he inveighed against it in the Senate. He "described with moving pathos," as Roosevelt tells the story, "how a friend of his, 'a bright young man from Baltimore,' a Sunday-School scholar, well recommended by his pastor, wished to

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be a letter-carrier," but the cruel examiners floored him by asking the shortest route from Baltimore to China, to which he replied that, as he never wished to go to China, he had n't looked up the route. Then, Senator Gorman asserted, the examiners quizzed him about all the steamship lines from the United States to Europe, branched off into geology and chemistry, and "turned him down."

Gorman was unaware that the Commissioners kept records of all their examinations, and when Roosevelt wrote him a polite note inquiring the name of the "bright young man from Baltimore," Gorman did not reply. Roosevelt also asked him, in case he shrank from giving the name of his informant, to give the date when the alleged examination took place. He even offered to open the files to any representative the Senator chose to send. Gorman, however, "not hitherto known as a sensitive soul," as Roosevelt remarks, "expressed himself as so shocked at the thought that the veracity of the bright young man should be doubted, that he could not bring himself to answer my letter." Accordingly, Roosevelt made a public statement that the Commissioners had never asked the questions which Gorman alleged. Gorman waited until the next session of Congress and then, in a speech before the Senate, complained that he had received a very

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"impudent" letter from Commissioner Roosevelt "cruelly" calling him to account, when he was simply endeavoring to right a great wrong which the Commission had committed. But neither then nor afterwards did he furnish "any clue to the identity of that child of his fondest fancy, the bright young man without a name."

Roosevelt must have chuckled with a righteous exultation at such evidence as this that the Lord had delivered the Philistines into his hands; and his abomination of the Spoils System must have deepened when he saw its Grosvenors and its Gormans brazen out the lies he caught them telling.

When the spoilsmen failed to get rid of the Commission by ridicule and by open attack, they resorted to the trick of not appropriating money for it in this or that district. But this did not succeed, for the Commission, owing to lack of funds, held no examinations in those districts, and therefore no candidates from them could get offices. This made the politicians unpopular with the hungry office-seekers whom they deprived of their food at the public trough.

The Commission had to struggle, however, not only to keep unfit candidates out of office, but to keep in office those who discharged their duty honestly and zealously. After every election there came

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a rush of Congressmen and others, to turn out the tried and trusty employees and to put in their own applicants. Such an overturn was of course detrimental to the service; first, because it substituted greenhorns for trained employees, and next, because it introduced the haphazard of politicians' whims for a just scheme of promotion and retention in office. Roosevelt lamented bitterly over the injustice and he denounced the waste. Many cases of grievous hardship came to his notice. Widows, whose only means of support for themselves and their little children was their salary, were thrown upon the street in order that rapacious politicians might secure places for their henchmen. Roosevelt might plead, but the politician remained obdurate. What was the tragic lot of a widow and starving children compared with keeping promises with greedy "heelers"? Roosevelt saw that there was no redress except through the extension of the classified service. This he urged at all times, and ten years later, when he was himself President, he added more than fifty thousand offices to the list of those which the spoilsmen could not clutch.

He served six years as Civil Service Commissioner, being reappointed in 1892 by President Cleveland. The overturn in parties which made Cleveland President for the second time, enabled Roosevelt to

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watch more closely the working of the Reform System and he did what he could to safeguard those Government employees who were Republicans from being ousted for the benefit of Democrats. In general, he believed in laying down certain principles on the tenure of office and in standing resolutely by them. Thus, in 1891, under Harrison, on being urged to retain General Corse, the excellent Democratic Postmaster of Boston, he replied to his friend Curtis Guild that Corse ought to be continued as a matter of principle and not because Cleveland, several years before, had retained Pearson, the Republican Postmaster of New York, as an exception.

At the end of six years, Roosevelt felt that he had worked on the Commission long enough to let the American people understand how necessary it was to maintain and extend the Merit System in the Civil Service. A sudden access of virtue had just cast out the Tammany Ring in New York City and set up Mr. Strong, a Reformer, as Mayor. He wished to secure Roosevelt's help and Roosevelt was eager to give it. The Mayor offered him the headship of the Street Cleaning Department, but this he declined, not because he thought the place beneath him, but because he lacked the necessary scientific qualifications, and Mayor Strong was lucky in finding for it the best man in the country, Colonel

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George E. Waring. Accordingly, the Mayor appointed Roosevelt President of the Board of Police Commissioners, and he accepted.

The Police System in New York City in 1895, when Roosevelt took control, was a monstrosity which, in almost every respect, did exactly the opposite from what the Police System is organized to do. Moral values had been so perverted that it took a strong man to hold fast to the rudimentary distinctions between Good and Evil. The Police existed, in theory, to protect the lives and property of respectable citizens; to catch law-breakers and hand them over to the courts for punishment; to hunt down gamblers, swindlers, and all the other various criminals and purveyors of vice. In reality, the Police under Tammany abetted crime and protected the vicious. This they did, not because they had any special hostility to Virtue — they probably knew too little about it to form a dispassionate opinion anyway — but because Vice paid better. They held the cynical view that human nature will always breed a great many persons having a propensity to licentious or violent habits; that laws were made to check and punish these persons, and that they might go their pernicious ways unmolested if the Police took no notice of them. So the Police established a system of immunity which anybody could enjoy by paying the

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price. Notorious gambling-hells "ran wide open" after handing the required sum to the high police official who extorted it. Hundreds of houses of ill-fame carried on their hideous traffic undisturbed, so long as the Police Captain of the district received his weekly bribe. Gangs of roughs, toughs, and gunmen pursued their piratical business without thinking of the law, for they shared their spoils with the supposed officers of the law. And there were more degenerate miscreants still, who connived with the Police and went unscathed. As if the vast sums collected from these willing bribers were not enough, the Police added a system of blackmail to be levied on those who were not deliberately vicious, but who sought convenience. If you walked downtown you found the sidewalk in front of certain stores almost barricaded by packing-boxes, whereas next door the way might be clear. This simply meant that the firm which wished to use the sidewalk for its private advantage paid the policeman on that beat, and he looked the other way. As there was an ordinance against almost every conceivable thing, so the Police had a price for making every ordinance a dead letter.

Was this a cosmic joke, a nightmare of cynicism, a delusion? No, New York was classed in the reference books as a Christian city, and this was its Christianity.

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Roosevelt knew the seamless bond which connected the crime and vice of the city with corrupt politics. The party Bosses, Republicans and Democrats alike, were the final profiters from police blackmail and bribery. As he held his mandate from a Reform Administration, he might expect to be aided by it on the political side; at least, he did not fear that the heads of the other departments would secretly work to block his purification of the Police.

A swift examination showed him that the New York Police Department actually protected the criminals and promoted every kind of iniquity which it existed to put down. It was as if in a hospital which should cure the sick, the doctors, instead of curing disease, should make the sick worse and should make the well sick. How was Roosevelt, equally valiant and honest, to conquer this Hydra? He took the straight way dictated by common sense. First of all, he gained the confidence and respect of his men. He said afterwards, that even at its worst, when he went into office, the majority of the Police wanted to do right; that their instincts were loyal; and this meant much, because they were tempted on all sides by vicious wrongdoers; they had constantly before them the example of superiors who took bribes and they received neither recognition nor praise for their own worthy deeds.

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The Force came very soon to understand that under Roosevelt every man would get a "square deal." "Pulls" had no efficacy. The Chief Commissioner personally kept track of as many men as he could. When he saw in the papers one morning that Patrolman X had saved a woman from drowning, he looked him up, found that the man had been twenty-two years in the service, had saved twenty-five lives, and had never been noticed, much less thanked, by the Commission. More than this, he had to buy his own uniform, and as this was often rendered unfit for further use when he rescued persons from drowning, or from a burning house, his heroism cost him much in dollars and cents. By Roosevelt's orders the Department henceforth paid for new uniforms in such cases, and it awarded medals. By recognizing the good, and by weeding out as fast as possible the bad members of the Force, Roosevelt thus organized the best body of Police which New York City had ever seen. There were, of course, some black sheep among them whom he could not reach, but he changed the fashion, so that it was no longer a point of excellence to be a black sheep.

Roosevelt rigorously enforced the laws, without regard to his personal opinion. It happened that at that time the good people of New York insisted that

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liquor saloons should do no business on Sundays. This prohibition had long been on the statute book, but it had been generally evaded because the saloon-keepers had paid the Bosses, who controlled the Police Department, to let them keep open — usually by a side door — on Sundays. Indeed, the statute was evidently passed by the Bosses in order to widen their opportunity for blackmail; but in this they overreached themselves. For the liquor-sellers at last revolted, and they held conferences with the Bosses — David B. Hill was then the Democratic State Boss and Richard Croker the Tammany Boss — and they published in the *Wine and Spirit Gazette*, their organ, this statement: "An agreement was made between the leaders of Tammany Hall and the liquor-dealers, according to which the monthly blackmail paid to the force should be discontinued in return for political support." Croker and his pals, taking it as a matter of course that the public knew their methods, neither denied this incriminating statement nor thought it worth noticing.

For a while all the saloons enjoyed equal immunity in selling drinks on Sunday. Then came Roosevelt and ordered his men to close every saloon. Many of the bar-keepers laughed incredulously at the patrolman who gave the order; many others flew into a rage. The public denounced this attempt to strangle

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its liberties and reviled the Police Chief as the would-be enforcer of obsolescent blue laws. But they could not frighten Roosevelt: the saloons were closed. Nevertheless, even he could not prevail against the overwhelming desire for drink. Crowds of virtuous citizens preferred an honest police force, but they preferred their beer or their whiskey still more, and joined with the criminal classes, the disreputables, and all the others who regarded any law as outrageous which interfered with their personal habits. Accordingly, since they could not budge Roosevelt, they changed the law. A compliant local judge discovered that it was lawful to take what drink you chose with a meal, and the result was that, as Roosevelt describes it, a man by eating one pretzel might drink seventeen beers.

Roosevelt himself visited all parts of the city and chiefly those where Vice grew flagrant at night. The journalists, who knew of his tours of inspection and were always on the alert for the picturesque, likened him to the great Caliph who in similar fashion investigated Baghdad, and they nicknamed him Haroun al Roosevelt. He had for his companion Jacob Riis, a remarkable Dane who migrated to this country in youth, got the position of reporter on one of the New York dailies, frequented the courts, studied the condition of the abject poor in the tenement-

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houses, and the haunts where Vice breeds like scum on stagnant pools, and wrote a book, "How the Other Half Lives," which startled the consciences of the well-to-do and the virtuous. Riis showed Roosevelt everything. Police headquarters were in Mulberry Street, and yet within a stone's throw iniquity flourished. He guided him through the Tenderloin District, and the wharves, and so they made the rounds of the vast city. More than once Roosevelt surprised a shirking patrolman on his beat, but his purpose they all knew was to see justice done, and to keep the officers of the Force up to the highest standard of duty.

One other anecdote concerning his experience as Police Commissioner I repeat, because it shows by what happy touches of humor he sometimes dispersed menacing clouds. A German Jew-baiter, Rector Ahlwardt, came over from Berlin to preach a crusade against the Jews. Great trepidation spread through the Jewish colony and they asked Roosevelt to forbid Ahlwardt from holding public meetings against them. This, he saw, would make a martyr of the German persecutor and probably harm the Jews more than it would help them. So Roosevelt bethought him of a device which worked perfectly. He summoned forty of the best Jewish policemen on the Force and ordered them to preserve order in the hall

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and prevent Ahlwardt from being interrupted or abused. The meeting passed off without disturbance; Ahlwardt stormed in vain against the Jews; the audience and the public saw the humor of the affair and Jew-baiting gained no foothold in New York City.

Although Roosevelt thoroughly enjoyed his work as Police Commissioner, he felt rightly that it did not afford him the freest scope to exercise his powers. Much as he valued executive work, the putting into practice and carrying out of laws, he felt more and more strongly the desire to make them, and his instinct told him that he was fitted for this higher task. When, therefore, the newly elected Republican President, William McKinley, offered him the apparently modest position of Assistant Secretary of the Navy, he accepted it.

There was general grieving in New York City — except among the criminals and Tammany — at the news of his resignation. All sorts of persons expressed regrets that were really sincere, and their gratitude for the good which he had done for them all. Some of them protested that he ought not to abandon the duty which he had discharged so valiantly. One of these was Edwin L. Godkin, editor of *The Nation* and the *New York Evening Post*, a critic who seldom spoke politely of anything except ideals which had not been attained, or commended per-

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sons who were not dead and so beyond reach of praise. Since Roosevelt himself has quoted this passage from Godkin's letter to him, I think it ought to be reprinted here: "I have a concern, as the Quakers say, to put on record my earnest belief that in New York you are doing the greatest work of which any American today is capable, and exhibiting to the young men of the country the spectacle of a very important office administered by a man of high character in the most efficient way amid a thousand difficulties. As a lesson in politics I cannot think of anything more instructive."

Godkin was a great power for good, in spite of the obvious unpopularity which an incessant critic cannot fail to draw down upon himself. The most pessimistic of us secretly crave a little respite when for half an hour we may forget the circumambient and all-pervading gloom: music, or an entertaining book, or a dear friend lifts the burden from us. And then comes our uncompromising pessimist and chides us for our softness and for letting ourselves be led astray from our pessimism. His Jeremiads are probably justified, and as the historian looks back he finds that they give the truest statement of the past; for the present must be very bad, indeed, if it does not discover conditions still worse in the past from which it has emerged. But Godkin living could not

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escape from two sorts of unsympathetic depreciators: first, the wicked who smarted under his just scourge, and next, the upright, who tired of unremittent censure, although they admitted that it was just.

Roosevelt came, quite naturally, to set the doer above the critic, who, he thought, quickly degenerated into a fault-finder and from that into a common scold. When a man plunges into a river to save somebody from drowning, if you do not plunge in yourself, at least do not jeer at him for his method of swimming. So Roosevelt, who shrank from no bodily or moral risk himself, held in scorn the "timid good," the "acidly cantankerous," the peace-at-any-price people, and the entire tribe of those who, instead of attacking iniquities and abuses, attacked those who are desperately engaged in fighting these. For this reason he probably failed to absorb from Godkin's criticism some of the benefit which it might have brought him. The pills were bitter, but salutary. While he was Police Commissioner one of Joseph Choate's epigrams passed current and is still worth recalling. When some one remarked that New York was a very wicked city, Choate replied, "How can you expect it to be otherwise, when Dana makes Vice so attractive in the *Sun* every morning, and Godkin makes Virtue so odious in the *Post* every

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afternoon?" Charles A. Dana, the editor of the *Sun*, the stanch supporter of Tammany Hall, and the apologist of almost every evil movement for nearly thirty years, was a writer of diabolical cleverness whose newspaper competed with Godkin's among the intellectual readers in search of amusement. At one time, when Godkin had been particularly caustic, and the Mugwumps at Harvard were unusually critical, Roosevelt attended a committee meeting at the University. After talking with President Eliot, he went and sat by a professor, and remarked, playfully, "Eliot is really a good fellow at heart. Do you suppose that, if he bit Godkin, it would take?"

So Roosevelt went back to Washington to be henceforth, as it proved, a national figure whose career was to be forever embedded in the structural growth of the United States.

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CHAPTER VII

THE ROUGH RIDER

WHEN Roosevelt returned to Washington in March, 1897, to take up his duties as a subordinate officer in the National Government, he was thirty-eight years old; a man in the prime of life, with the strength of an ox, but quick in movement, and tough in endurance. A rapid thinker, his intellect seemed as impervious to fatigue as was his energy. Along with this physical and intellectual make-up went courage of both kinds, passion for justice, and a buoying sense of obligation towards his fellows and the State. His career thus far had prepared him for the highest service. Born and brought up amid what our society classifiers, with their sure democratic instincts, loved to call the "aristocratic" circle in New York, his three years in the Assembly at Albany introduced him to the motley group of Representatives of high and low, bank presidents and farmers, blacklegs and philanthropists, who gathered there to make the laws for New York State. There he displayed the preference, characteristic of him through life, of choosing his intimates irrespective of their occupation or social

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label. Then he went out on the Plains and learned to live with wild men, for whom the artificial distinctions of civilization had no meaning. He adapted himself to a primeval standard in which courage and a rough sense of honor were the chief virtues. But this experience did still more for him than prove his personal power of getting along with such lower types of men, for it revealed to him the human extremes of the American Nation. How vast it was, how varied, how intricate, and, potentially, how sublime! Lincoln, coming out of the Kentucky backwoods, first to Springfield, Illinois, then to Chicago in its youth, and finally to Washington, similarly passed in review the American contrasts of his time.

More specific was Roosevelt's training as a Civil Service Commissioner. The public had been applauding him as a youthful prodigy, as a fellow of high spirit, of undisputed valor, of brilliant flashes, of versatility, but the worldly-wise, who have been too often fooled, were haunted by the suspicion that perhaps this astonishing young man would turn out to be only a meteor after all. His six years of routine work on the Civil Service Commission put this anxiety to rest. That work could not be carried on successfully by a man of moods and spurts, but only by a man of solid moral basis, who could not be disheartened by opposition or deflected by threats

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or by temptations, and, as I have before suggested, the people began to accustom itself to the fact that whatever position Roosevelt filled was conspicuous precisely because he filled it. A good while was still to elapse before we understood that notoriety was inseparable from him, and did not need to be explained by the theory that he was constantly setting traps for self-advertisement.

As Police Commissioner of New York City he continued his familiar methods, and deepened the impression he had created. He carried boldness to the point of audacity and glorified the "square deal." Whatever he undertook, he drove through with the remorselessness of a zealot. He made no pretense of treating humbugs and shams as if they were honest and real; and when he found that the laws which were made to punish criminals, were used to protect them, no scruple prevented him from achieving the spirit of the law, although he might disregard its perverted letter.

Ponder this striking example. The City of New York forbade the sale of liquor to minors. But this ordinance was so completely unobserved that a large proportion of the common drunks brought before the Police Court were lads and even young girls, to whom the bar-tenders sold with impunity. The children, often the little children of depraved par-

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ents, "rushed the growler"; factory hands sent the boys out regularly to fetch their bottle or bucket of drink from the saloons. Everybody knew of these breaches of the law, but the framers of the law had taken care to make it very difficult to procure legal evidence of those breaches. The public conscience was pricked a little when the newspapers told it that one of the youths sent for liquor had drunk so much of it that he fell into a stupor, took refuge in an old building, and that there the rats had eaten him alive. Whether it was before or after this horror that Chief Commissioner Roosevelt decided to take the law into his own hands, I do not know, but what he did was swift. The Police engaged one of the minors, who had been in the habit of going to the saloons, to go for another supply, and then to testify. This summary proceeding scared the rum-dealers and, no doubt, they guarded against being caught again. But the victims of moral dry rot held up their hands in rebuke and one of the city Judges wept metaphorical tears of chagrin that the Police should engage in the awful crime of enticing a youth to commit crime. The record does not show that this Judge, or any other, had ever done anything to check the practice of selling liquor to minors, a practice which inevitably led thousands of the youth of New York City to become drunkards.

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How do you judge Roosevelt's act? Do you admit that a little wrong may ever be done in order to secure a great right? Roosevelt held, in such cases, that the wrong is only technical, or a blind set up by the wicked to shield themselves. The danger of allowing each person to play with the law, as with a toy, is evident. That way lies Jesuitry; but each infringement must be judged on its own merits, and as Roosevelt followed more and more these short cuts to justice he needed to be more closely scrutinized. Was his real object to attain justice or his own desires?

The Roosevelts moved back to Washington in March, 1897, and Theodore at once went to work in the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy in that amazing building which John Hay called "Mullett's masterpiece," where the Navy, War, and State Departments found shelter under one roof. The Secretary of the Navy was John D. Long, of Massachusetts, who had been a Congressman and Governor, was a man of cultivation and geniality, and a lawyer of high reputation. Although sixty years old, he was believed never to have made an enemy either in politics or at the Bar. Those who knew the two gentlemen wondered whether the somewhat leisurely and conservative Secretary could leash in his restless young First Assistant, with his Titanic en-

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ergy and his head full of projects. No one believed that even Roosevelt could startle Governor Long out of his habitual urbanity, but every one could foresee that they might so clash in policy that either the head or the assistant would have to retire.

Nothing is waste that touches the man of genius. So the two years which Roosevelt spent in writing, fifteen years before, the "History of the Naval War of 1812," now served him to good purpose; for it gave him much information about the past of the United States Navy and it quickened his interest in the problems of the Navy as it should be at that time. The close of the Civil War in 1865 left the United States with a formidable fleet, which during the next quarter of a century deteriorated until it comprised only a collection of rotting and unserviceable ships. Then came a reaction, followed by the construction of an up-to-date fleet, and by the recognition by Congress that the United States must pursue a modern policy in naval affairs. Roosevelt had always felt the danger to the United States of maintaining a despicable or an inadequate Navy, and from the moment he entered the Department he set about pushing the construction of the unfinished vessels and of improving the quality of the personnel.

He was impelled to do this, not merely by his instinct to bring whatever he undertook up to the

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highest standard, but also because he had a premonition that a crisis was at hand which might call the country at an instant's notice to protect itself with all the power it had. Two recent events aroused his vigilance. In December, 1895, President Cleveland sent to England a message upholding the Monroe Doctrine and warning the British that they must arbitrate their dispute with Venezuela over a boundary, or fight. This sledgehammer blow at England's pride might well have caused war had not sober patriots on both sides of the Atlantic, aghast at this shocking possibility, smoothed the way to an understanding, and had not the British Government itself acknowledged the rightness of the demand for arbitration. So the danger vanished, but Roosevelt, and every other thoughtful American, said to himself, "Suppose England had taken up the challenge, what had we to defend ourselves with?" And we compared the long roll of the great British Fleet with the paltry list of our own ships, and realized that we should have been helpless.

The other fact which impressed Roosevelt was the insurrection in Cuba which kept that island in perpetual disorder. The cruel means, especially reconcentration and starvation, by which the Spaniards tried to put down the Cubans stirred the sympathy of the Americans, and the number of those who be-

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lieved that the United States ought to interfere in behalf of humanity grew from month to month. A spark might kindle an explosion. Obviously, therefore, the United States must have a Navy equipped and ready for any emergency in the Caribbean.

During his first year in office, Assistant Secretary Roosevelt busied himself with all the details of preparation; he encouraged the enthusiasm of the officers of the New Navy, for he shared their hopes; he added, wherever he could, to its efficiency, as when by securing from Congress an appropriation of nearly a million dollars — which seemed then enormous — for target practice. He promoted a spirit of alertness — and all the while he watched the horizon towards Cuba where the signs grew angrier and angrier.

But the young Secretary had to act with circumspection. In the first place the policy of the Department was formulated by Secretary Long. In the next place the Navy could not come into action until President McKinley and the Department of State gave the word. The President, desiring to keep the peace up to the very end, would not countenance any move which might seem to the Spaniards either a threat or an insult. As the open speeding-up of naval preparations would be construed as both, nothing must be done to excite alarm. In the autumn

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of 1897, however, some of the Spaniards at Havana treated the American residents there with so much surliness that the American Government took the precaution to send a battleship to the Havana Harbor as a warning to the menacing Spaniards, and as a protection, in case of outbreak, to American citizens and their property.

But what was meant for a precaution proved to be the immediate cause of war. Early in the evening of February 15, 1898, the battleship *Maine*, peaceably riding at her moorings in the harbor, was blown up. Two officers and 264 enlisted men were killed by the explosion and in the sinking of the ship. Nearly as many more, with Captain Charles D. Sigsbee, the commander, were rescued. The next morning the newspapers carried the report to all parts of the United States, and, indeed, to the whole world. A tidal wave of anger surged over this country. "That means war!" was the common utterance. Some of us, who abhorred the thought of war, urged that at least we wait until the guilt could be fixed. The reports of the catastrophe conflicted. Was the ship destroyed by the explosion of shells in its own magazine, or was it blown up from outside? If the latter, who set off the mine? The Spaniards? It seemed unlikely, if they wished war, that they should resort to so clumsy a provocation! Might not the insurgents

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themselves have done it, in order to force the United States to interfere? While the country waited, the anger grew. At Washington, nobody denied that war was coming. All that our diplomacy attempted to do was to stave off the actual declaration long enough to give time for our naval and military preparation.

I doubt whether Roosevelt ever worked with greater relish than during the weeks succeeding the blowing-up of the *Maine*. At last he had his opportunity, which he improved night and day. The Navy Department arranged in hot haste to victual the ships; to provide them with stores of coal and ammunition; to bring the crews up to their full quota by enlisting; to lay out a plan of campaign; to see to the naval bases and the lines of communication; and to coöperate with the War Department in making ready the land fortifications along the shore. Of course all these labors did not fall on Roosevelt's shoulders alone, but being a tireless and willing worker he had more than one man's share in the preparations.

But the great fact that war was coming — war, the test — delighted him, and his sense of humor was not allowed to sleep. For the peace-at-any-price folk, the denouncers of the Navy and the Army, the preachers of the doctrine that as all men are good it was wicked to build defenses as if we suspected the

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goodness of our neighbors, now rushed to the Government for protection. A certain lady of importance, who had a seaside villa, begged that a battleship should be anchored just outside of it. Seaboard cities frantically demanded that adequate protection should be sent to them. The spokesman for one of these cities happened to be a politician of such importance that President McKinley told the Assistant Secretary that his request must be granted. Accordingly, Roosevelt put one of the old monitors in commission, and had a tug tow it, at the imminent risk of its crew, to the harbor which it was to guard, and there the water-logged old craft stayed, to the relief of the inhabitants of the city and the self-satisfaction of the Congressman who was able to give them so shining a proof of his power with the Administration. Many frightened Bostonians transferred their securities to the bank vaults of Worcester, and they, too, clamored for naval watch and ward. Roosevelt must have been made unusually merry by such tidings from Boston, the city which he regarded as particularly prolific in "the men who formed the lunatic fringe in all reform movements."

It did not astonish him that the financiers and the business men, who were amassing great fortunes in peace, should frown on war, which interrupted their fortune-making; but he laughed when he remem-

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bered what they and many other vague pacifists had been solemnly proclaiming. There was the Senator, for instance, who had denied that we needed a Navy, because, if the emergency came, he said, we could improvise one, and "build a battleship in every creek." There were also the spread-eagle Americans, the swaggerers and braggarts, who amused themselves in tail-twisting and insulting other nations so long as they could do this with impunity; but now they were brought to book, and their fears magnified the possible danger they might run from the invasion of irate Spaniards. Their imagination pictured to them the poor old Spanish warship *Viscaya*, as having as great possibility for destruction as the entire British Fleet itself.

At all these things Roosevelt laughed to himself, because they confirmed the gospel of military and naval preparedness, which he had been preaching for years, the gospel which these very opponents reviled him for; but instead of contenting himself by saying to them, "I told you so," he pushed on preparations for war at full speed, determined to make the utmost of the existing resources. The Navy had clearly two tasks before it. It must blockade Cuba, which entailed the patrol of the Caribbean Sea and the protection of the Atlantic ports, and it must prevent the Spanish Fleet, known to be at the

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Philippines, from crossing the Pacific Ocean, harassing our commerce, and threatening our harbors on our Western coast. Through Roosevelt's instrumentality, Commodore George Dewey had been appointed in the preceding autumn to command our Asiatic Squadron, and while, in the absence of Govnor Long, Roosevelt was Acting-Secretary, he sent the following dispatch:

Washington, February 25, '98.

DEWEY, Hong Kong:

Order the squadron, except the *Monocacy*, to Hong Kong. Keep full of coal. In the event of declaration of war Spain, your duty will be to see that the Spanish squadron does not leave the Asiatic coast, and then offensive operations in Philippine Islands. Keep *Olympia* until further orders.

ROOSEVELT

I would not give the impression that Roosevelt was the dictator of the Navy Department, or that all, or most, of its notable achievements came from his suggestion, but the plain fact is, wherever you look at its most active and fruitful preparations for war, you find him vigorously assisting. The order he sent Commodore Dewey led directly to the chief naval event of the war, the destruction of the Spanish Fleet by our Asiatic Squadron in Manila Bay, on May 1st. Long before this victory came to pass, however, Roosevelt had resigned from the Navy Department and was seeking an ampler outlet for his energy.

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Having accomplished his duty as Assistant Secretary — a post which he felt was primarily for a civilian — he thought that he had a right to retire from it, and to gratify his long-cherished desire to take part in the actual warfare. He did not wish, he said, to have to give some excuse to his children for not having fought in the war. As he had insisted that we ought to free Cuba from Spanish tyranny and cruelty, he could not consistently refuse to join actively in the liberation. A man who teaches the duty of fighting should pay with his body when the fighting comes.

General Alger, the Secretary of War, had a great liking for Roosevelt, offered him a commission in the Army, and even the command of a regiment. This he prudently declined, having no technical military knowledge. He proposed instead, that Dr. Leonard Wood should be made Colonel, and that he should serve under Wood as Lieutenant-Colonel. By profession, Wood was a physician, who had graduated at the Harvard Medical School, and then had been a contract surgeon with the American Army on the plains. In this service he went through the roughest kind of campaigning and, being ambitious, and having an instinct for military science, he studied the manuals and learned from them and through actual practice the principles of war. In this way he became

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competent to lead troops. He was about two years younger than Roosevelt, with an iron frame, great tenacity and endurance, a man of few words, but of clear sight and quick decision.

While Roosevelt finished his business at the Navy Department, Colonel Wood hurried to San Antonio, Texas, the rendezvous of the First Regiment of Volunteer Cavalry. A call for volunteers, issued by Roosevelt and endorsed by Secretary Alger, spread through the West and Southwest, and it met with a quick response. Not even in Garibaldi's famous Thousand was such a strange crowd gathered. It comprised cow-punchers, ranchmen, hunters, professional gamblers and rascals of the Border, sportsmen, mingled with the society sports, former football players and oarsmen, polo-players and lovers of adventure from the great Eastern cities. They all had one quality in common — courage — and they were all bound together by one common bond, devotion to Theodore Roosevelt. Nearly every one of them knew him personally; some of the Western men had hunted or ranched with him; some of the Eastern had been with him in college, or had had contact with him in one of the many vicissitudes of his career. It was a remarkable spectacle, this flocking to a man not yet forty years old, whose chief work up to that time had been in the supposed com-

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monplace position of a Civil Service Commissioner and of a New York Police Commissioner! But Roosevelt's name was already known throughout the country: it excited great admiration in many, grave doubts in many, and curiosity in all.

His friends urged him not to go. It seemed to some of us almost wantonly reckless that he should put his life, which had been so valuable and evidently held the promise of still higher achievement, at the risk of a Spanish bullet, or of yellow fever in Cuba, for the sake of a cause which did not concern the safety of his country. But he never considered risks or chances. He felt it as a duty that we must free Cuba, and that every one who recognized this duty should do his share in performing it. No doubt the excitement and the noble side of our war attracted him. No doubt, also, that he remembered that the reputation of a successful soldier had often proved a ladder to political promotion in our Republic. Every reader of our history, though he were the dullest, understood that. But that was not the chief reason, or even an important one, in shaping his decision.

He went to San Antonio in May, and worked without respite in learning the rudiments of war and in teaching them to his motley volunteers, who were already called by the public, and will be known in history, as the " Rough Riders." He felt relieved when

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ROOSEVELT AS A ROUGH RIDER

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"Teddy's Terrors," one of the nicknames proposed, did not stick to them. At the end of the month the regiment proceeded to Tampa, Florida, whence part of it sailed for Cuba on the transport *Yucatan*. It sufficiently indicates the state of chaos which then reigned in our Army preparations, that half the regiment and all the horses and mules were left behind. Arrived in Cuba, the first troops, accustomed only to the saddle, had to hobble along as best they could, on foot, so that some wag rechristened them "Wood's Weary Walkers." The rest of the regiment, with the mounts, came a little later, and at Las Guasimas they had their first skirmish with the Spaniards. Eight of them were killed, and they were buried in one grave. Afterward, in writing the history of the Rough Riders, Roosevelt said: "There could be no more honorable burial than that of these men in a common grave — Indian and cowboy, miner, packer, and college athlete — the man of unknown ancestry from the lonely Western plains, and the man who carried on his watch the crests of the Stuyvesants and the Fishes, one in the way they had met death, just as during life they had been one in their daring and their loyalty." [1]

I shall not attempt to follow in detail the story of the Rough Riders, but shall touch only on those

[1] *The Rough Riders*, 120.

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matters which refer to Roosevelt himself. Wood, having been promoted to Brigadier-General, in command of a larger unit, Theodore became Colonel of the regiment. On July 1 and 2 he commanded the Rough Riders in their attack on and capture of San Juan Hill, in connection with some colored troops. In this engagement, their nearest approach to a battle, the Rough Riders, who had less than five hundred men in action, lost eighty-nine in killed and wounded. Then followed a dreary life in the trenches until Santiago surrendered; and then a still more terrible experience while they waited for Spain to give up the war. Under a killing tropical sun, receiving irregular and often damaged food, without tent or other protection from the heat or from the rain, the Rough Riders endured for weeks the ravages of fever, climate, and privation. To realize that their sufferings were directly owing to the blunders and incompetence of the War Department at home, brought no consolation, for the soldiers could see no reason why the Department should not go on blundering indefinitely. One of the Rough Riders told me that, when stricken with fever, he lay for days on the beach, and that anchored within the distance a tennis-ball could be thrown was a steamer loaded with medicines, but that no orders were given to bring them ashore!

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The Rough Riders were hard hit by disease, but not harder than the other regiments in the Army. Every one of their officers, except the Colonel and another, had yellow fever, and at one time more than half of the regiment was sick. A terrible depression weighed them down. They almost despaired, not only of being relieved, but of living. To face the entire Spanish Army would have been a great joy, compared with this sinking, melting away, against the invisible fever.

The Administration at Washington, however, although it knew the condition of the Army in Cuba, seemed indifferent rather than anxious, and talked about moving the troops into the interior, to the high ground round San Luis. Thereupon, Roosevelt wrote to General Shafter, his commanding officer:

To keep us here, in the opinion of every officer commanding a division or a brigade, will simply involve the destruction of thousands. There is no possible reason for not shipping practically the entire command North at once. . . .

All of us are certain, as soon as the authorities at Washington fully appreciate the conditions of the army, to be sent home. If we are kept here it will in all human probability mean an appalling disaster, for the surgeons here estimate that over half the army, if kept here during the sickly season, will die.

This is not only terrible from the standpoint of the individual lives lost, but it means ruin from the standpoint of military efficiency of the flower of the American Army, for the great bulk of the regulars are here with you. The sick-list,

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large though it is, exceeding four thousand, affords but a faint index of the debilitation of the army. Not ten per cent are fit for active work.

This letter General Shafter really desired to have written, but when Roosevelt handed it to him, he hesitated to receive it. Still Roosevelt persisted, left it in the General's hands, and the General gave it to the correspondent of the Associated Press who was present. A few hours later it had been telegraphed to the United States. Shafter called a council of war of the division and brigade commanders, which he invited Roosevelt to attend, although his rank as Colonel did not entitle him to take part. When the Generals heard that the Army was to be kept in Cuba all summer and sent up into the hills, they agreed that Roosevelt's protest must be supported, and they drew up the famous "Round Robin" in which they repeated Roosevelt's warnings. Neither President McKinley nor the War Department could be deaf to such a statement as this: "This army must be moved at once or perish. As the army can be safely moved now, the persons responsible for preventing such a move will be responsible for the unnecessary loss of many thousands of lives."

This letter also was immediately published at home, and outcries of horror and indignation went up. A few sticklers for military etiquette professed

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WITH GENERAL JOSEPH WHEELER AND LEONARD WOOD

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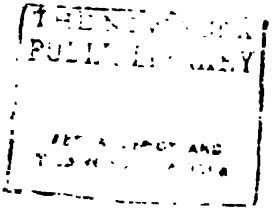

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to be astonished that any officer should be guilty of the insubordination which these letters implied, and, of course, the blame fell on Roosevelt. The truth is that Shafter, dismayed at the condition of the Fifth Army, and at his own inability to make the Government understand the frightful doom which was impending, deliberately chose Roosevelt to commit the insubordination; for, as he was a volunteer officer, soon to be discharged, the act could not harm his future, whereas the regular officers were not likely to be popular with the War Department after they had called the attention of the world to its maleficent incompetence.

Washington heard the shot fired by the Colonel of the Rough Riders, and without loss of time ordered the Army home. The sick were transported by thousands to Montauk Point, at the eastern end of Long Island, where, in spite of the best medical care which could be improvised, large numbers of them died. But the Army knew, and the American public knew, that Roosevelt, by his "insubordination," had saved multitudes of lives. At Montauk Point he was the most popular man in America.

This concluded Roosevelt's career as a soldier. The experience introduced to the public those virile qualities of his with which his friends were familiar. He had not endured the hardships of ranching and hunt-

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ing in vain. If life on the Plains democratized him, life with the Rough Riders did also; indeed, without the former there would have been no Rough Riders and no Colonel Roosevelt. He learned not only how to lead a regiment according to the tactics of that day, but also — and this was far more important — he learned how disasters and the waste of lives, and treasure, and the ignominy of a disgracefully managed campaign, sprang directly from unpreparedness. This burned indelibly into his memory. It stimulated all his subsequent appeals to make the Army and Navy large enough for any probable sudden demand upon them. "America the Unready" had won the war against a decrepit, impoverished, third-rate power, but had paid for her victory hundreds of millions of dollars and tens of thousands of lives; what would the count have mounted to had she been pitted against a really formidable foe? Would she have won at all against any enemy fully prepared and of nearly equal strength? Many of us dismissed Roosevelt's warnings then as the outpourings of a Jingo, of one who loved war for war's sake, and wished to graft onto the peaceful traditions and standards of our Republic the militarism of Europe. We misjudged him.

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CHAPTER VIII

GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK — VICE-PRESIDENT

WHILE Roosevelt was at Montauk Point waiting with his regiment to be mustered out, and cheering up the sick soldiers, he had direct proof that every war breeds a President. For the politicians went down to call on him and, although they did not propose that he should be a candidate for the Presidency — that was not a Presidential year — they looked him over to see how he would do for Governor of New York. Since Cleveland set the fashion in 1882, the New York governorship was regarded as the easiest stepping-stone to the Presidency. Roosevelt's popularity was so great that if the matter had been left in the hands of the people, he would have been nominated with a rush; but the Empire State was dominated by Bosses — Senator David B. Hill, the Democratic State Boss, Senator Thomas C. Platt, the Republican State Boss, and Richard Croker, Boss of Tammany, — who had intimate relations with the wicked of both parties, and often decided an election by throwing their votes or withholding them.

Senator Platt enjoyed, with Senator Quay of Penn-

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sylvania, the evil reputation of being the most unscrupulous Boss in the United States. I do not undertake to say whether the palm should go to him or to Quay, but no one disputes that Platt held New York State in his hand, or that Quay held Pennsylvania in his. By the year 1898, both were recognized as representing a type of Boss that was becoming extinct. The business-man type, of which Senator Aldrich was a perfect exponent, was pushing to the front. Quay, greedy of money, had never made a pretense of showing even a conventional respect for the Eighth Commandment; Platt, on the other hand, seems not to have enriched himself by his political deals, but to have taken his pay in the gratification he enjoyed from wielding autocratic power. Platt also betrayed that he dated from the last generation by his religiosity. He used his piety as an elephant uses his proboscis, to reach about and secure desired objects, large or small, the trunk of a tree or a bag of peanuts. He was a Sunday-School teacher and, I believe, a deacon of his church. Roosevelt says that he occasionally interlarded his political talk with theological discussion, but that his very dry theology was wholly divorced from moral implications. The wonderful chapter on "The New York Governorship," in Roosevelt's "Autobiography," ought to be read by every American, because it gives the most remarka-

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ble account of the actual working of the political Machine in a great American State, the disguises that Machine wore, its absolute unscrupulousness, its wickedness, its purpose to destroy the ideals of democracy. And Roosevelt's analysis of Platt may stand alongside of Machiavelli's portraits of the Italian Bosses four hundred years before — they were not called Bosses then.

Senator Platt did not wish to have Roosevelt hold the governorship, or any other office in which the independent young man might worry the wily old Senator.[1] But the Republican Party in New York State happened to be in such a very bad condition that the likelihood that it would carry the election that autumn was slight: for the public had temporarily tired of Machine rule. Platt's managers saw that they must pick out a really strong candidate and they understood that nobody at that moment could rival Roosevelt's popularity. So they impressed on Platt that he must accept the Rough Rider Chief, and Mr. Lemuel Quigg, an ex-Congressman, a journalist formerly on the *New York Tribune*, a stanch Republican, who nevertheless recognized that discretion and intelligence might sometimes be allowed a voice in Machine dictation, journeyed to Montauk and had a friendly, frank conversation with the Colonel.

[1] Platt and Quay were both born in 1833.

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Quigg spoke for nobody but himself; he merely wished to sound Roosevelt. Roosevelt made no pledges; he defined his general attitude and wished to understand what the Platt Machine proposed. Quigg said that Platt admitted that the present Governor, Black, could not be reëlected, but that he had doubts as to Roosevelt's docility. Republican leaders and local chairmen in all parts of the State, however, enthusiastically called for Roosevelt, and Quigg did not wish to have the Republican Party split into two factions. He believed that Platt would accede if he could be convinced that Roosevelt would not "make war on him." Roosevelt, without promising anything, replied that he had no intention of making "war on Mr. Platt, or on anybody else, if war could be avoided." He said

> that what [he] wanted was to be Governor and not a faction leader; that [he] certainly would confer with the organization men, as with everybody else who seemed to [him] to have knowledge of and interest in public affairs, and that as to Mr. Platt and the organization leaders, [he] would do so in the sincere hope that there might always result harmony of opinion and purpose; but that while [he] would try to get on well with the organization, the organization must with equal sincerity strive to do what [he] regarded as essential for the public good; and that in every case, after full consideration of what everybody had to say who might possess real knowledge of the matter, [he] should have to act finally as [his] own judgment and conscience dictated, and administer the State Government as [he] thought it ought to be administered.[1]

[1] *Autobiography*, 295.

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Having assured Roosevelt that his statements were exactly what Quigg expected, Quigg returned to New York City, reported his conversation to Platt, and, in due season, the free citizens of New York learned that, with Platt's consent, the Colonel of the Rough Riders would be nominated by the Republican State Convention for the governorship of New York.

During the campaign, Roosevelt stumped the State at a pace unknown till then. It was his first real campaign, and he went from place to place in a special train speaking at every stop from his car platform or, in the larger towns, staying long enough to address great audiences out of doors or in the local theatre. In November, he was elected by a majority of 18,000, a slender margin as it looks now, but sufficient for its purpose, and representing a really notable victory, because it had been expected that the Democrats would beat any other Republican candidate but him by overwhelming odds. So, after an absence of fifteen years, he returned to dwell in Albany.

Before he was sworn in as Governor, he had already measured strength with Senator Platt. The Senator asked him with amiable condescension whether he had any special friends he would like to have appointed on the committees. Roosevelt

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expressed surprise, supposing that the Speaker appointed committees. Then Platt told him that the Speaker had not been agreed upon yet, but that of course he would name the list given to him. Roosevelt understood the situation, but said nothing. A week later, however, at another conference, Platt handed him a telegram, in which the sender accepted with pleasure his appointment as Superintendent of Public Works. Roosevelt liked this man and thought him honest, but he did not think him the best person for that particular work, and he did not intend as Governor to have his appointments dictated to him, because he would naturally be held responsible for his appointees. When he told Platt that that man would not do, the Senator flew into a passion; he had never met such insubordination before in any public official, and he decided to fight the issue from the start. Roosevelt did not allow himself to lose his temper; he was perfectly polite while Platt let loose his fury; and before they parted Platt understood which was master. The Governor appointed Colonel Partridge to the position and, as it had chiefly to do with the canals of the State, it was most important. Indeed, the canal scandals under Roosevelt's predecessor, Governor Black, had so roused the popular conscience that it threatened to break down the supremacy of the Republican Party.

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Jacob Riis describes Roosevelt's administration as introducing the Ten Commandments into the government at Albany, and we need hardly be told that the young Governor applied his usual methods and promoted his favorite reforms. Finding the Civil Service encrusted with abuses, he pushed legislation which established a high standard of reform. The starch which had been taken out of the Civil Service Law under Governor Black was put back, stiffened. He insisted on enforcing the Factory Law, for the protection of operatives; and the law regulating sweat-shops, which he inspected himself, with Riis for his companion.

Perhaps his hottest battle was over the law to tax corporations which held public franchises. This touched the owners of street railways in the cities and towns, and many other corporations which enjoyed a monopoly in managing quasi-public utilities. "In politics there is no politics," said that elderly early mentor of Roosevelt when he first sat in the Assembly. Legislatures existed simply to do the bidding of Big Business, was the creed of the men who controlled Big Business. They contributed impartially to the Republican and Democratic campaign funds. They had Republican Assemblymen and Democratic Assemblymen in their service, and their lobbyists worked harmoniously with either party. Merely to

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suggest that the special privileges of the corporations might be open to discussion was sacrilege. No wonder, therefore, that the holders of public franchises marshaled all their forces against the Governor.

Boss Platt wrote Roosevelt a letter — one of the sort inspired more by sorrow than by anger — to the effect that he had been warned that the Governor was a little loose on the relations of capital and labor, on trusts and combinations, and, in general, on the right of a man to run his business as he chose, aways respecting, of course, the Ten Commandments and the Penal Code. The Senator was shocked and pained to perceive that this warning had a real basis, and that the Governor's "altruism" in behalf of the people had led him to urge curtailing the rights of corporations. Roosevelt, instead of feeling contrite at this chiding, redoubled his energy. The party managers buried the bill. Roosevelt then sent a special message, as the New York Governors are empowered to do. It was laid on the Speaker's desk, but no notice was taken of it. The next morning he sent this second message to the Speaker:

I learn that the emergency message which I sent last evening to the Assembly on behalf of the Franchise Tax Bill has not been read. I, therefore, send hereby another. I need not impress upon the Assembly the need of passing this bill at once. . . . It establishes the principle that hereafter corpora-

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tions holding franchises from the public shall pay their just share of the public burden.[1]

The Speaker, the Assembly, and the Machine now gave heed. The corporations saw that it would be suicidal to bring down on themselves the avalanche of fury which was accumulating. The bill passed. Roosevelt had set a precedent for controlling corporate truculence.

While Roosevelt was accomplishing these very real triumphs for justice and popular welfare, the professional critics went on finding fault with him. Although the passage of one bill after another gave tangible proof that, far from being Platt's "man," or the slave of the Machine, he followed his own ideals, did not satisfy these critics. They suspected that there was some wickedness behind it, and they professed to be greatly disturbed that Roosevelt frequently breakfasted or dined with Platt. What could this mean except that he took his instructions from the Boss? How could he, who made a pretense of righteousness, consent to visit the Sunday-School political teacher, much less to sit at the table with him? The doubts and anxieties of these self-appointed defenders of public morals, and of the Republic even, found a spokesman in a young journalist who had then come recently from college. This per-

[1] Riis, 221.

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son, whom we will call X., met Mr. Roosevelt at a public reception and with the brusqueness, to put it mildly, of a hereditary reformer, he demanded to know why the Governor breakfasted and dined with Boss Platt. Mr. Roosevelt replied, with that courtesy of his which was never more complete than when it conveyed his sarcasm, that a person in public office, like himself, was obliged to meet officially all kinds of men and women, and he added: "Why, Mr. X., I have even dined with your father." X. did not pursue his investigation, and the bystanders, who had vague recollections of the father's misfortunes in Wall Street, thought that the son was a little indiscreet even for a hereditary reformer.

The truth about Roosevelt's going to Platt and breakfasting with him was very simple. The Senator spent the week till Friday afternoon in Washington, then he came to New York for Saturday and Sunday. Being somewhat infirm, although he was not, as we now reckon, an old man, he did not care to extend his trip to Albany, and so the young and vigorous Governor ran down from Albany and, at breakfast with Platt, discussed New York State affairs. What I have already quoted indicates, I think, that nobody knew better than the Boss himself that Roosevelt was not his "man."

One other example is too good to omit. The Super-

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intendent of Insurance was really one of Platt's men, and a person most grateful to the insurance companies. Governor Roosevelt, regarding him as unfit, not only declined to reappoint him, but actually appointed in his stead a superintendent whom Platt and the insurance companies could not manage, and so hated. Platt remonstrated. Finding his arguments futile, he broke out in threats that if his man was not reappointed, he would fight. He would forbid the Assembly to confirm Roosevelt's candidate. Roosevelt replied that as soon as the Assembly adjourned, he should appoint his candidate temporarily. Platt declared that when it reconvened, the Assembly would throw him out. This did not, however, frighten Roosevelt, who remarked that, although he foresaw he should have an uncomfortable time himself, he would "guarantee to make his opponents more uncomfortable still."

Later that day Platt sent one of his henchmen to deliver an ultimatum to the Governor. He repeated Platt's threats, but was unable to make an impression. Roosevelt got up to go. "You know it means your ruin?" said the henchman solemnly. "Well, we will see about that," Roosevelt replied, and had nearly reached the door when the henchman, anxious to give the prospective victim a last chance, warned him that the Senator would open the fight on the

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next day, and keep it up to the bitter end. "Yes," replied the Governor; "good-night." And he was just going out, when the henchman rushed after him, calling, "Hold on! We accept. Send in your nomination. The Senator is very sorry, but will make no further opposition." [1] Roosevelt adds that the bluff was carried through to the limit, but that after it failed, Platt did not renew his attempt to interfere with him.

Nevertheless, Roosevelt made no war on Platt or anybody else, merely for the fun of it. "We must use the tools we have," said Lincoln to John Hay; and Lincoln also had many tools which he did not choose, but which he had to work with. Roosevelt differed from the doctrinaire reformer, who would sit still and do nothing unless he had perfectly clean tools and pure conditions to work with. To do nothing until the millennium came would mean, of course, that the Machine would pursue its methods undisturbed. Roosevelt, on the contrary, knew that by coöperating with the Machine, as far as his conscience permitted, he could reach results much better than it aimed at.

Here are three of his letters to Platt, written at a time when the young journalist and the reformers of his stripe shed tears at the thought that Theodore Roosevelt was the obsequious servant of Boss Platt.

[1] *Autobiography*, 317.

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The first letter refers to Roosevelt's nomination to the Vice-Presidency, a possibility which the public was already discussing. The last two letters, written after he had been nominated by the Republicans, relate to the person whom he wished to see succeed himself as Governor of New York.

ROOSEVELT TO PLATT

February 1, 1900

First, and least important. If you happened to have seen the *Evening Post* recently, you ought to be amused, for it is moralizing with lofty indignation over the cringing servility I have displayed in the matter of the insurance superintendent. I fear it will soon take the view that it cannot possibly support you as long as you associate with me!

Now as to serious matters. I have, of course, done a great deal of thinking about the Vice-Presidency since the talk I had with you followed by the letter from Lodge and the visit from Payne, of Wisconsin. I have been reserving the matter to talk over with you, but in view of the publication in the *Sun* this morning, I would like to begin the conversation, as it were, by just a line or two now. I need not speak of the confidence I have in the judgment of you and Lodge, yet I can't help feeling more and more that the Vice-Presidency is not an office in which I could do anything and not an office in which a man who is still vigorous and not past middle life has much chance of doing anything. As you know, I am of an active nature. In spite of all the work and all the worry, — and very largely because of your own constant courtesy and consideration, my dear Senator, — I have thoroughly enjoyed being Governor. I have kept every promise, express or implied, I made on the stump, and I feel that the Republican Party is stronger before the State because of my incumbency.

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Certainly everything is being managed now on a perfectly straight basis and every office is as clean as a whistle.

Now, I should like to be Governor for another term, especially if we are able to take hold of the canals in serious shape. But as Vice-President, I don't see there is anything I can do. I would simply be a presiding officer, and that I should find a bore. As you know, I am a man of moderate means (although I am a little better off than the *Sun's* article would indicate) and I should have to live very simply in Washington and could not entertain in any way as Mr. Hobart and Mr. Morton entertained. My children are all growing up and I find the burden of their education constantly heavier, so that I am by no means sure that I ought to go into public life at all, provided some remunerative work offered itself. The only reason I would like to go on is that as I have not been a money maker I feel rather in honor bound to leave my children the equivalent in a way of a substantial sum of actual achievement in politics or letters. Now, as Governor, I can achieve something, but as Vice-President I should achieve nothing. The more I look at it, the less I feel as if the Vice-Presidency offered anything to me that would warrant my taking it.

Of course, I shall not say anything until I hear from you, and possibly not until I see you, but I did want you to know just how I felt.

ROOSEVELT TO PLATT

Oyster Bay, August 13, 1900

I noticed in Saturday's paper that you had spoken of my suggesting Judge Andrews. I did not intend to make the suggestion public, and I wrote you with entire freedom, hoping that perhaps I could suggest some man who would commend himself to your judgment as being acceptable generally to the Republican Party. I am an organization Republican of a very strong type, as I understand the word "organization," but in trying to suggest a candidate for Governor, I am not

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seeking either to put up an organization or a non-organization man, but simply a first-class Republican, who will commend himself to all Republicans, and, for the matter of that, to all citizens who wish good government. Judge Andrews needs no endorsement from any man living as to his Republicanism. From the time he was Mayor of Syracuse through his long and distinguished service on the bench he has been recognized as a Republican and a citizen of the highest type. I write this because your interview seems to convey the impression, which I am sure you did not mean to convey, that in some way my suggestions are antagonistic to the organization. I do not understand quite what you mean by the suggestion of my friends, for I do not know who the men are to whom you thus refer, nor why they are singled out for reference as making any suggestions about the Governorship.

In your last interview, I understood that you wished me to be back in the State at the time of the convention. As I wish to be able to give the nominee hearty and effective support, this necessarily means that I do have a great interest in whom is nominated.

Roosevelt to Platt

Oyster Bay, August 20, 1900

I have your letter of the 16th. I wish to see a straight Republican nomination for the governorship. The men whom I have mentioned, such as ex-Judge Andrews and Secretary Root, are as good Republicans as can be found in the State, and I confess I have n't the slightest idea what you mean when you say, "if we are to lower the standard and nominate such men as you suggest, we might as well die first as last." To nominate such a man as either of these is to raise the standard; to speak of it as lowering the standard is an utter misuse of words.

You say that we must nominate some Republican who "will carry out the wishes of the organization," and add that

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"I have not yet made up my mind who that man is." Of one thing I am certain, that, to have it publicly known that the candidate, whoever he may be, "will carry out the wishes of the organization," would insure his defeat; for such a statement implies that he would merely register the decrees of a small body of men inside the Republican Party, instead of trying to work for the success of the party as a whole and of good citizenship generally. It is not the business of a Governor to "carry out the wishes of the organization" unless these wishes coincide with the good of the Party and of the State. If they do, then he ought to have them put into effect; if they do not, then as a matter of course he ought to disregard them. To pursue any other course would be to show servility; and a servile man is always an undesirable — not to say a contemptible — public servant. A Governor should, of course, try in good faith to work with the organization; but under no circumstances should he be servile to it, or "carry out its wishes" unless his own best judgment is that they ought to be carried out. I am a good organization man myself, as I understand the word "organization," but it is in the highest degree foolish to make a fetish of the word "organization" and to treat any man or any small group of men as embodying the organization. The organization should strive to give effective, intelligent, and honest leadership to and representation of the Republican Party, just as the Republican Party strives to give wise and upright government to the State. When what I have said ceases to be true of either organization or party, it means that the organization or party is not performing its duty, and is losing the reason for its existence.[1]

Roosevelt's independence as Governor of New York, and the very important reforms which, in spite of the Machine, he had driven through, greatly increased his personal popularity throughout the

[1] Washburn, 34–38.

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country. To citizens, East and West, who knew nothing about the condition of the factories, canals, and insurance institutions in New York State, the name "Roosevelt" stood for a man as honest as he was energetic, and as fearless as he was true. Platt and the Machine naturally wished to get rid of this marplot, who could not be manipulated, who held strange and subversive ideas as to the extent to which the Ten Commandments and the Penal Code should be allowed to encroach on politics and Big Business, and who was hopelessly "altruistic" in caring for the poor and down-trodden and outcast. Even Platt knew that, while it would not be safe for him to try to dominate the popular hero against his own preference and that of the public, still to shelve Roosevelt in the office of Vice-President would bring peace to the sadly disturbed Boss, and would restore jobs to many of his greedy followers. So he talked up the Vice-Presidency for Roosevelt, and he let the impression circulate that in the autumn there would be a new Governor.

Roosevelt, however, repeated to many persons the views he wrote to Platt in the letter quoted above, and his friends and opponents both understood that he wished to continue as Governor for another two years, to carry on the fight against corruption, and to save himself from being laid away in the Vice-

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Presidency — the receiving-tomb of many ambitious politicians. In spite of the fact that within thirty-five years, by the assassination of two Presidents, two Vice-Presidents had succeeded to the highest office in the Nation, Vice-Presidents were popularly regarded as being mere phantoms without any real power or influence as long as their term lasted, and cut off from all hopes in the future. Roosevelt himself had this notion. But the Presidential conventions, with criminal disregard of the qualifications of a candidate to perform the duties of President if accident thrust them upon him, went on recklessly nominating nonentities for Vice-President.

The following extract from a confidential letter by John Hay, Secretary of State, to Mr. Henry White, at the American Embassy in London, reveals the attitude towards Roosevelt of the Administration itself. Allowance must be made, of course, for Hay's well-known habit of persiflage:

HAY TO HENRY WHITE

Teddy has been here: have you heard of it? It was more fun than a goat. He came down with a sombre resolution thrown on his strenuous brow to let McKinley and Hanna know once for all that he would not be Vice-President, and found to his stupefaction that nobody in Washington, except Platt, had ever dreamed of such a thing. He did not even have a chance to launch his *nolo episcopari* at the Major. That statesman said he did not want him on the ticket — that he would

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be far more valuable in New York — and Root said, with his frank and murderous smile, "Of course not — you're not fit for it." And so he went back quite eased in his mind, but considerably bruised in his *amour propre*.

In February, Roosevelt issued a public notice that he would not consent to run for the Vice-Presidency, and throughout the spring, until the meeting of the Republican Convention in Philadelphia, on June 21st, he clung to that determination. Platt, anxious lest Roosevelt should be reëlected Governor against the plans of the Machine, quietly worked up a "boom" for Roosevelt's nomination as Vice-President; and he connived with Quay to steer the Pennsylvania delegation in the same direction. The delegates met and renominated McKinley as a matter of course. Then, with irresistible pressure, they insisted on nominating Roosevelt. Swept off his feet, and convinced that the demand came genuinely from representatives from all over the country, he accepted, and was chosen by acclamation. The Boss-led delegations from New York and Pennsylvania added their votes to those of the real Roosevelt enthusiasts.

Happy, pious Tom Platt, relieved from the nightmare of having to struggle for two years more with a Reform Governor at Albany! Some of Roosevelt's critics construed his yielding, at the last moment, as

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evidence of his being ruled by Platt after all. But this insinuation collapsed as soon as the facts were known. As an episode in the annals of political sport, I should like to have had Roosevelt run for Governor a second time, defy Platt and all his imps, and be reëlected.

As I have just quoted Secretary Hay's sarcastic remarks on the possibility that Roosevelt might be the candidate for Vice-President, I will add this extract from Hay's note to the successful candidate himself, dated June 21st:

> As it is all over but the shouting, I take a moment of this cool morning of the longest day in the year to offer you my cordial congratulations. . . . You have received the greatest compliment the country could pay you, and although it was not precisely what you and your friends desire, I have no doubt it is all for the best. Nothing can keep you from doing good work wherever you are — nor from getting lots of fun out of it.[1]

The Presidential campaign which followed, shook the country only a little less than that of 1896 had done. For William J. Bryan was again the Democratic candidate, honest money — the gold against the silver standard — was again the issue — although the Spanish War had injected Imperialism into the Republican platform — and the conservative elements were still anxious. The persistence of

[1] W. R. Thayer: *John Hay*, II, 343.

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the Free Silver heresy and of Bryan's hold on the popular imagination alarmed them; for it seemed to contradict the hope implied in Lincoln's saying that you can't fool all the people all the time. Here was a demagogue, who had been exposed and beaten four years before, who raised his head — or should I say his voice? — with increased effrontery and to an equally large and enthusiastic audience.

Roosevelt took his full share in campaigning for the Republican ticket. He spoke in the East and in the West, and for the first time the people of many of the States heard him speak and saw his actual presence. His attitude as a speaker, his gestures, the way in which his pent-up thoughts seemed almost to strangle him before he could utter them, his smile showing the white rows of teeth, his fist clenched as if to strike an invisible adversary, the sudden dropping of his voice, and leveling of his forefinger as he became almost conversational in tone, and seemed to address special individuals in the crowd before him, the strokes of sarcasm, stern and cutting, and the swift flashes of humor which set the great multitude in a roar, became in that summer and autumn familiar to millions of his countrymen; and the cartoonists made his features and gestures familiar to many other millions. On his Western trip, Roosevelt for a companion and understudy had Curtis Guild,

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and more than once when Roosevelt lost his voice completely, Guild had to speak for him. Up to election day in November, the Republicans did not feel confident, but when the votes were counted, McKinley had a plurality of over 830,000, and beat Bryan by more than a million.

By an absurd and bungling practice, which obtains in our political life, the Administration elected in November does not take office until the following March, an interval which permits the old Administration, often beaten and discredited, to continue in office for four months after the people have turned it out. As we have lately seen, such an Administration does not experience a death-bed repentance, but employs the moratorium to rivet upon the country the evil policies which the people have repudiated. This interval Roosevelt spent in finishing his work as Governor of New York State, and in removing to Washington. Then he had a foretaste of the life of inactivity to which the Vice-Presidency doomed him.

After being sworn in on March 4, 1901, his only stated duty was to preside over the Senate, but as the Senate did not usually sit during the hot weather, he had still more leisure thrust upon him. Of course, he could write, and there never was a time, even at his busiest, when he had not a book, or addresses,

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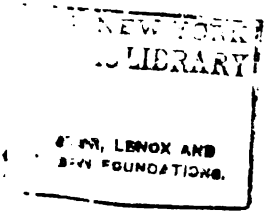

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or articles on the stocks. But writing alone was not now sufficient to exercise his very vigorous faculties. Perhaps, for the first time in his life, he may have had a foreboding of what ennui meant. He consulted Justice White, now Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, whether it would be proper for him to enroll himself as a student in the Washington Law School. Justice White feared that this might be regarded as a slight to the dignity of the Vice-Presidential office, but he told Roosevelt what law-books to read, and offered to quiz him every Saturday evening. Before autumn came, however, when they could carry out their plan, a tragic event altered the course of Roosevelt's career.

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CHAPTER IX

PRESIDENT

DURING the summer of 1901, the city of Buffalo, New York, held a Pan-American Exposition. President McKinley visited this and, while holding a public reception on September 6, he was twice shot by Leon Czolgosz, a Polish anarchist. When the news reached him, Roosevelt went straight to Buffalo, to attend to any matters which the President might suggest; but as the surgeons pronounced the wounds not fatal nor even dangerous, Roosevelt left with a light heart, and joined his family at Mount Tahawrus in the Adirondacks. For several days cheerful bulletins came. Then, on Friday afternoon the 13th, when the Vice-President and his party were coming down from a climb to the top of Mount Marcy, a messenger brought a telegram which read:

The President's condition has changed for the worse.
CORTELYOU.

The climbers on Mount Marcy were fifty miles from the end of the railroad and ten miles from the nearest telephone at the lower club-house. They hurried forward on foot, following the trail to the nearest cottage; where a runner arrived with a mes-

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sage, "Come at once." Further messages awaited them at the lower club-house. President McKinley was dying, and Roosevelt must lose no time. His secretary, William Loeb, telephoned from North Creek, the end of the railroad, that he had had a locomotive there for hours with full steam up. So Roosevelt and the driver of his buckboard dashed on through the night, over the uncertain mountain road, dangerous even by daylight, at breakneck speed. Dawn was breaking when they came to North Creek. There, Loeb told him that President McKinley was dead. Then they steamed back to civilization as fast as possible, reached the main trunk line, and sped on to Buffalo without a moment's delay. It was afternoon when the special train came into the station, and Roosevelt, having covered the distance of 440 miles from Mount Marcy, was driven to the house of Ansley Wilcox. Most of the Cabinet had preceded him to Buffalo, and Secretary Root, the ranking member present — Secretary Hay having remained in Washington — asked the Vice-President to be sworn in at once. Roosevelt replied:

I shall take the oath of office in obedience to your request, sir, and in doing so, it shall be my aim to continue absolutely unbroken the policies of President McKinley for the peace, prosperity, and honor of our beloved country.

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The oath having been administered, the new President said:

> In order to help me keep the promise I have taken, I would ask the Cabinet to retain their positions at least for some months to come. I shall rely upon you, gentlemen, upon your loyalty and fidelity, to help me.[1]

On September 19, John Hay wrote to his intimate friend, Henry Adams:

> I have just received your letter from Stockholm and shuddered at the awful clairvoyance of your last phrase about Teddy's luck.
>
> Well, he is here in the saddle again. That is, he is in Canton to attend President McKinley's funeral and will have his first Cabinet meeting in the White House tomorrow. He came down from Buffalo Monday night — and in the station, without waiting an instant, told me I must stay with him — that I could not decline nor even consider. I saw, of course, it was best for him to start off that way, and so I said I would stay, forever, of course, for it would be worse to say I would stay a while than it would be to go out at once. I can still go at any moment he gets tired of me or when I collapse.[2]

Writing to Lady Jeune at this time Hay said:

> I think you know Mr. Roosevelt, our new President. He is an old and intimate friend of mine: a young fellow of infinite dash and originality.

In this manner, "Teddy's luck" brought him into the White House, as the twenty-sixth President of the United States. Early in the summer, his old col-

[1] Washburn, 40. [2] W. R. Thayer: *John Hay*, II, 268.

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lege friend and steadfast admirer, Charles Washburn, remarked: "I would not like to be in McKinley's shoes. He has a man of destiny behind him." Destiny is the one artificer who can use all tools and who finds a short cut to his goal through ways mysterious and most devious. As I have before remarked, nothing commonplace could happen to Theodore Roosevelt. He emerged triumphant from the receiving-vault of the Vice-Presidency, where his enemies supposed they had laid him away for good. In ancient days, his midnight dash from Mount Marcy, and his flight by train across New York State to Buffalo, would have become a myth symbolizing the response of a hero to an Olympian summons. If we ponder it well, was it indeed less than this?

In 1899, Mr. James Bryce, the most penetrating of foreign observers of American life had said, in words that now seem prophetic: "Theodore Roosevelt is the hope of American politics."

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CHAPTER X

THE WORLD WHICH ROOSEVELT CONFRONTED

TO understand the work of a statesman we must know something of the world in which he lived. That is his material, out of which he tries to embody his ideals as the sculptor carves his out of marble. We are constantly under the illusions of time. Some critics say, for instance, that Washington fitted so perfectly the environment of the American Colonies during the last half of the eighteenth century, that he was the direct product of that environment; I prefer to think, however, that he possessed certain individual traits which, and not the time, made him George Washington, and would have enabled him to have mastered a different period if he had been born in it. In like manner, having known Theodore Roosevelt, I do not believe that he would have been dumb or passive or colorless or slothful or futile under any other conceivable conditions. Just as it was not New York City, nor Harvard, nor North Dakota, which made him *Roosevelt*, so the *Roosevelt* in him would have persisted under whatever sky.

The time offers the opportunities. The gift in the

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man, innate and incalculable, determines how he will seize them and what he will do with them. Now it is because I think that Roosevelt had a clear vision of the world in which he dwelt, and saw the path by which to lead and improve it, that his career has profound significance to me. Picturesque he was, and picturesqueness made whatever he did interesting. But far deeper qualities made him significant.

From ancient times, at least from the days of Greece and Rome, Democracy as a political ideal had been dreamed of, and had even been put into practice on a small scale here and there. But its shortcomings and the frailty of human nature made it the despair of practical men and the laughing-stock of philosophers and ironists. Nevertheless, the conviction that no man has a right to enslave another would not die. And in modern times the English sense of justice and the English belief that a man must have a right to be heard on matters concerning himself and his government, forced Democracy, as an actual system, to the front. The demand for representation caused the American colonists to break away from England and to govern themselves independently. Every one now sees that this demand was the just and logical carrying forward of English ideals.

At about the same time, in France, Rousseau,

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gathering into his own heart, from many sources, the suggestions and emotions of Democracy, uttered them with a voice so magical that it roused millions of other hearts and made the emotions seem intellectual proofs. As the magician waves his wand and turns common pebbles into precious stones, so Rousseau turned the dead crater of Europe into a molten volcano. The ideals of Fraternity and Equality were joined with that of Liberty and the three were accepted as indivisible elements of Democracy. In the United States we set our Democratic principles going. In Europe the Revolution shattered many of the hateful methods of Despotism, shattered, but did not destroy them. The amazing genius of Napoleon intervened to deflect Europe from her march towards Democracy and to convert her into the servant of his personal ambition.

Over here, in spite of the hideous contradiction of slavery, which ate like a black ulcer into a part of our body politic, the Democratic ideal not only prevailed, but came to be taken for granted as a heaven-revealed truth, which only fools would question or dispute. In Europe, the monarchs of the Old Régime made a desperate rally and put down Napoleon, thinking that by smashing him they would smash also the tremendous Democratic forces by which he had gained his supremacy. They put back, so far as

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they could, the old feudal bases of privilege and of more or less disguised tyranny. The Restoration could not slumber quietly, for the forces of the Revolution burst out from time to time. They wished to realize the liberty of which they had had a glimpse in 1789 and which the Old Régime had snatched away from them. The Spirit of Nationality now strengthened their efforts for independence and liberty and another Spirit came stalking after both. This was the Social Revolution, which refusing to be satisfied by a merely political victory boldly preached Internationalism as a higher ideal than Nationalism. Truly, Time still devours all his children, and the hysterical desires bred by half-truths prevent the coming and triumphant reign of Truth. While these various and mutually clashing motives swept Europe along during the first half of the nineteenth century, a different current hurried the United States into the rapids. Should they continue to exist as one Union binding together sections with different interests, or should the Union be dissolved and those sections attempt to lead a separate political existence? Fortunately, for the preservation of the Union, the question of slavery was uppermost in one of the sections. Slavery could not be dismissed as a merely economic question. Many Americans declared that it was primarily a moral issue. And this

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transformed what the Southern section would gladly have limited to economics into a war for a moral ideal. With the destruction of slavery in the South the preservation of the Union came as a matter of course.

The Civil War itself had given a great stimulus to industry, to the need of providing military equipment and supplies, and of extending, as rapidly as possible, the railroads which were the chief means of transportation. When the war ended in 1865, this expansion went on at an increasing rate. The energy which had been devoted to military purposes was now directed to commerce and industry, to developing the vast unpeopled tracts from the Mississippi to the Pacific, and to exploiting the hitherto neglected or unknown natural resources of the country. Every year science furnished new methods of converting nature's products into man's wealth. Chemistry, the doubtful science, Midas-like, turned into gold everything that it touched. There were not native workers enough, and so a steady stream of foreign immigrants flocked over from abroad. They came at first to better their own fortunes by sharing in the unlimited American harvests. Later, our Captains of Industry, regardless of the quality of the newcomers, and intent only on securing cheap labor to multiply their hoards, combed the lowest political

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and social levels of southern Europe and of western Asia for employees. The immigrants ceased to look upon America as the Land of Promise, the land where they intended to settle, to make their homes, and to rear their children; it became for them only a huge factory where they earned a living and for which they felt no affection. On the contrary, many of them looked forward to returning to their native country as soon as they had saved up a little competence here. The politicians, equally negligent of the real welfare of the United States, gave to these masses of foreigners quick and unscrutinized naturalization as American citizens.

So it fell out that before the end of the nineteenth century a great gulf was opening between Labor and Capital. Now a community can thrive only when all its classes feel that they have *common* interests; but since American Labor was largely composed of foreigners, it acquired a double antagonism to Capital. It had not only the supposed natural antagonism of employee to employer, but also the further cause of misunderstanding, and hostility even, which came from the foreignness of its members. Another ominous condition arose. The United States ceased to be the Land of Promise, where any hard-working and thrifty man could better himself and even become rich. The gates of Opportunity were closing. The

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free lands, which the Nation offered to any one who would cultivate them, had mostly been taken up; the immigrant who had been a laborer in Europe, was a laborer here. Moreover, the political conditions in Europe often added to the burdens and irritation caused by the industrial conditions there. And the immigrant in coming to America brought with him all his grievances, political not less than industrial. He was too ignorant to discriminate; he could only feel. Anarchy and Nihilism, which were his natural reaction against his despotic oppressors in Germany and Russia, he went on cultivating here, where, by the simple process of naturalization, he became politically his own despot in a year or two.

But, of course, the very core of the feud which threatens to disrupt modern civilization was the discovery that, in any final adjustment, the *political* did not suffice. What availed it for the laborer and the capitalist to be equal at the polls, for the vote of one to count as much as the vote of the other, if the two men were actually worlds apart in their social and industrial lives? Equality must seem to the laborer a cruel deception and a sham unless it results in equality in the distribution of wealth and of opportunity. How this is to be attained I have never seen satisfactorily stated; but the impossibility of realizing their dreams, or the blank folly of doting on

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them, has never prevented men from striving to obtain them. From this has resulted the frantic pursuit, during a century and a quarter, of all sorts of projects from Babuvism to Bolshevism, which, if they could not install Utopia overnight, were at least calculated to destroy Civilization as it is. The common feature of the propagandists of all these doctrines seems to be the throwing-over of the Past; not merely of the proved evils and inadequacies of the Past, but of our conception of right and wrong, of morals, of human relations, and of our duty towards the Eternal, which, having sprung out of the Past, must be jettisoned in a fury of contempt. In short, the destroyers of Society (writhing under the immemorial sting of injustice, which they believed was wholly caused by their privileged fellows, and not even in part inherent in the nature of things) supposed that by blotting out Privilege they could establish their ideals of Justice and Equality.

In the forward nations of Europe, not less than in the United States, these ideals had been arrived at, at least in name, and so far as concerned politics. Even in Germany, the most rigid of Absolute Despotisms, a phantasm of political liberty was allowed to flit about the Halls of Parliament. But through the cunning of Bismarck the Socialist masses were bound all the more tightly to the Hohenzollern Despot by

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liens which seemed to be socialistic. Nevertheless, the principles of the Social Revolution spread secretly from European country to country, whether it professed to be Monarchical or Republican.

In the United States, when Theodore Roosevelt succeeded to the Presidency in 1901, a similar antagonism between Capital and Labor had become chronic. Capital was arrogant. Its advance since the Civil War had been unmatched in history. The inundation of wealth which had poured in, compared with all previous amassing of riches, was as the Mississippi to the slender stream of Pactolus. The men whose energy had created this wealth, and the men who managed and increased it, lost the sense of their proper relations with the rest of the community and the Nation. According to the current opinion progress consisted in doubling wealth in the shortest time possible; this meant the employment of larger and larger masses of labor; therefore laborers should be satisfied, nay, should be grateful to the capitalists who provided them with the means of a livelihood; and those capitalists assumed that what they regarded as necessary to progress, defined by them, should be accepted as necessary to the prosperity of the Nation.

Such an alignment of the two elements, which composed the Nation, indicated how far the so-called

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Civilization, which modern industrialism has created, was from achieving that social harmony, which is the ideal and must be the base of every wholesome and enduring State. The condition of the working classes in this country was undoubtedly better than that in Europe. And the discontent and occasional violence here were fomented by foreign agitators who tried to make our workers believe that they were as much oppressed as their foreign brothers. Wise observers saw that a collision, it might be a catastrophe, was bound to come unless some means could be found to bring concord to the antagonists. Here was surely an amazing paradox. The United States, already possessed of fabulous wealth and daily amassing more, was heading straight for a social and economic revolution, because a part of the inhabitants claimed to be the slaves of industrialism and of poverty.

This slight outline, which every reader can complete for himself, will serve to show what sort of a world, especially what sort of an American world, confronted Roosevelt when he took the reins of government. His task was stupendous, the problems he had to solve were baffling. Other public men of the time saw its portents, but he alone seems to have felt that it was his duty to strain every nerve to avert the impending disaster. And he alone, as it seems to me, understood the best means to take.

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Honesty, Justice, Reason, were not to him mere words to decorate sonorous messages or to catch and placate the hearers of his passionate speeches; they were the most real of all realities, moral agents to be used to clear away the deadlock into which Civilization was settling.

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CHAPTER XI

ROOSEVELT'S FOREIGN POLICY

IN taking the oath of office at Buffalo, Roosevelt promised to continue President McKinley's policies. And this he set about doing loyally. He retained McKinley's Cabinet,[1] who were working out the adjustments already agreed upon. McKinley was probably the best-natured President who ever occupied the White House. He instinctively shrank from hurting anybody's feelings. Persons who went to see him in dudgeon, to complain against some act which displeased them, found him "a bower of roses," too sweet and soft to be treated harshly. He could say "no" to applicants for office so gently that they felt no resentment. For twenty years he had advocated a protective tariff so mellifluously, and he believed so sincerely in its efficacy, that he could at any time hypnotize himself by repeating his own phrases. If he had ever studied the economic subject, it was long ago, and having adopted the tenets which an Ohio Republican could hardly escape from adopting, he never revised them or even questioned their

[1] A few months later J. W. Griggs retired as Attorney-General and was succeeded by P. C. Knox, and C. E. Smith was replaced by H. W. Payne as Postmaster-General.

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validity. His protectionism, like cheese, only grew stronger with age. As a politician, he was so hospitable that in the campaign of 1896, which was fought to maintain the gold standard and the financial honesty of the United States, he showed very plainly that he had no prejudice against free silver, and it was only at the last moment that the Republican managers could persuade him to take a firm stand for gold.

The chief business which McKinley left behind him, the work which Roosevelt took up and carried on, concerned Imperialism. The Spanish War forced this subject to the front by leaving us in possession of the Philippines and by bequeathing to us the responsibility for Cuba and Porto Rico. We paid Spain for the Philippines, and in spite of constitutional doubts as to how a Republic like the United States could buy or hold subject peoples, we proceeded to conquer those islands and to set up an American administration in them. We also treated Porto Rico as a colony, to enjoy the blessing of our rule. And while we allowed Cuba to set up a Republic of her own, we made it very clear that our benevolent protection was behind her.

All this constituted Imperialism, against which many of our soberest citizens protested. They alleged that as a doctrine it contradicted the fundamental

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principles on which our nation was built. Since the Declaration of Independence, America had stood before the world as the champion and example of Liberty, and by our Civil War she had purged herself of Slavery. Imperialism made her the mistress of peoples who had never been consulted. Such moral inconsistency ought not to be tolerated. In addition to it was the political danger that lay in holding possessions on the other side of the Pacific. To keep them we must be prepared to defend them, and defense would involve maintaining a naval and military armament and of stimulating a warlike spirit, repugnant to our traditions. In short, Imperialism made the United States a World Power, and laid her open to its perils and entanglements.

But while a minority of the men and women of sober judgment and conscience opposed Imperialism, the large majority accepted it, and among these was Theodore Roosevelt. He believed that the recent war had involved us in a responsibility which we could not evade if we would. Having destroyed Spanish sovereignty in the Philippines, we must see to it that the people of those islands were protected. We could not leave them to govern themselves because they had no experience in government; nor could we dodge our obligation by selling them to any other Power. Far from hesitating because of legal or moral

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doubts, much less of questioning our ability to perform this new task, Roosevelt embraced Imperialism, with all its possible issues, boldly not to say exultantly. To him Imperialism meant national strength, the acknowledgment by the American people that the United States are a World Power and that they would not shrink from taking up any burden which that distinction involved.

When President Cleveland, at the end of 1895, sent his swingeing message in regard to the Venezuelan Boundary quarrel, Roosevelt was one of the first to foresee the remote consequences. And by the time he himself became President, less than six years later, several events — our taking of the Hawaiian Islands, the Spanish War, the island possessions which it saddled upon us — confirmed his conviction that the United States could no longer live isolated from the great interests and policies of the world, but must take their place among the ruling Powers. Having reached national maturity we must accept Expansion as the logical and normal ideal for our matured nation. Cleveland had laid down that the Monroe Doctrine was inviolable; Roosevelt insisted that we must not only bow to it in theory, but be prepared to defend it if necessary by force of arms.

Very naturally, therefore, Roosevelt encouraged

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the passing of legislation needed to complete the settlement of our relations with our new possessions. He paid especial attention to the men he sent to administer the Philippines, and later he was able to secure the services of W. Cameron Forbes as Governor-General. Mr. Forbes proved to be a Viceroy after the best British model and he looked after the interest of his wards so honestly and competently that conditions in the Philippines improved rapidly, and the American public in general felt no qualms over possessing them. But the Anti-Imperialists, to whom a moral issue does not cease to be moral simply because it has a material sugar-coating, kept up their protest.

There were, however, matters of internal policy; along with them Roosevelt inherited several foreign complications which he at once grappled with. In the Secretary of State, John Hay, he had a remarkable helper. Henry Adams told me that Hay was the first "man of the world" who had ever been Secretary of State. While this may be disputed, nobody can fail to see some truth in Adams's assertion. Hay had not only the manners of a gentleman, but also the special carriage of a diplomat. He was polite, affable, and usually accessible, without ever losing his innate dignity. An indefinable reserve warded off those who would either presume or indulge in undue familiarity.

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His quick wits kept him always on his guard. His main defect was his unwillingness to regard the Senate as having a right to pass judgment on his treaties. And instead of being compliant and compromising, he injured his cause with the Senators by letting them see too plainly that he regarded them as interlopers, and by peppering them with witty but not agreeable sarcasm. In dealing with foreign diplomats, on the other hand, he was at his best. They found him polished, straightforward, and urbane. He not only produced on them the impression of honesty, but he was honest. In all his diplomatic correspondence, whether he was writing confidentially to American representatives or was addressing official notes to foreign governments, I do not recall a single hint of double-dealing. Hay was the velvet glove, Roosevelt the hand of steel.

For many years Canada and the United States had enjoyed grievances towards each other, grievances over fisheries, over lumber, and other things, no one of which was worth going to war for. The discovery of gold in the Klondike, and the rush thither of thousands of fortune-seekers, revived the old question of the Alaskan Boundary; for it mattered a great deal whether some of the gold-fields were Alaskan — that is, American — or Canadian. Accordingly, a joint High Commission was appointed towards the end

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of McKinley's first administration to consider the claims and complaints of the two countries. The Canadians, however, instead of settling each point on its own merits, persisted in bringing in a list of twelve grievances which varied greatly in importance, and this method favored trading one claim against another. The result was that the Commission, failing to agree, disbanded. Nevertheless, the irritation continued, and Roosevelt, having become President, and being a person who was constitutionally opposed to shilly-shally, suggested to the State Department that a new Commission be appointed under conditions which would make a decision certain. He even went farther, he took precautions to assure a verdict in favor of the United States. He appointed three Commissioners — Senators Lodge, Root, and Turner; the Canadians appointed two, Sir A. L. Jetté and A. B. Aylesworth; the English representative was Alverstone, the Lord Chief Justice.

The President gave to Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, of the Supreme Court, who was going abroad for the summer, a letter which he was "indiscreetly" to show Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Balfour, and two or three other prominent Englishmen. In this letter he wrote:

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The claims of the Canadians for access to deep water along any part of the Alaskan Coast is just exactly as indefensible as if they should now suddenly claim the Island of Nantucket. . . .

I believe that no three men [the President said] in the United States could be found who would be more anxious than our own delegates to do justice to the British claim on all points where there is even a color of right on the British side. But the objection raised by certain Canadian authorities to Lodge, Root, and Turner, and especially to Lodge and Root, was that they had committed themselves on the general proposition. No man in public life in any position of prominence could have possibly avoided committing himself on the proposition, any more than Mr. Chamberlain could avoid committing himself on the question of the ownership of the Orkneys if some Scandinavian country suddenly claimed them. If this claim embodied other points as to which there was legitimate doubt, I believe Mr. Chamberlain would act fairly and squarely in deciding the matter; but if he appointed a commission to settle up all these questions, I certainly should not expect him to appoint three men, if he could find them, who believed that as to the Orkneys the question was an open one.

I wish to make one last effort to bring about an agreement through the Commission [he said in closing] which will enable the people of both countries to say that the result represents the feeling of the representatives of both countries. But if there is a disagreement, I wish it distinctly understood, not only that there will be no arbitration of the matter, but that in my message to Congress I shall take a position which will prevent any possibility of arbitration hereafter; a position . . . which will render it necessary for Congress to give me the authority to run the line as we claim it, by our own people, without any further regard to the attitude of England and Canada. If I paid attention to mere abstract rights, that is the position I ought to take anyhow. I have not taken it be-

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cause I wish to exhaust every effort to have the affair settled peacefully and with due regard to England's honor.[1]

In due time the Commission gave a decision in favor of the American contention. Lord Alverstone, who voted with the Americans, was suspected of having been chosen by the British Government because they knew his opinion, but I do not believe that this was true. A man of his honor, sitting in such a tribunal, would not have voted according to instructions from anybody.

Roosevelt's brusque way of bringing the Alaska Boundary Question to a quick decision, may be criticised as not being judicial. He took the short cut, just as he did years before in securing a witness against the New York saloon-keepers who destroyed the lives of thousands of boys and girls by making them drunkards. Strictly, of course, if the boundary dispute was to be submitted to a commission, he ought to have allowed the other party to appoint its own commissioners without any suggestion from him. But as the case had dragged on interminably, and he believed, and the world believed, and the Canadians themselves knew, that they intended to filibuster and postpone as long as possible, he took the common-sense way to a settlement. If he had resolved, as he had, to draw the boundary line "on

[1] W. R. Thayer: *John Hay*, II, 209, 210.

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his own hook," in case there was further pettifogging he committed no impropriety in warning the British statesmen of his purpose. In judging these Rooseveltian short cuts, the reader must decide whether they were justified by the good which they achieved.

Of even greater importance was the understanding reached, under Roosevelt's direction, with the British Government in regard to the construction of a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. By the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty of 1850, the United States and Great Britain agreed to maintain free and uninterrupted passage across the Isthmus, and, further, that neither country should "obtain or maintain to itself any control over the said ship-canal," or "assume or exercise any dominion . . . over any part of Central America." The ship-canal talked about as a probability in 1850 had become a necessity by 1900. During the Spanish-American War, the American battleship *Oregon* had been obliged to make the voyage round Cape Horn, from San Francisco to Cuba, and this served to impress on the people of the United States the really acute need of a canal across the Isthmus, so that in time of war with a powerful enemy, our Atlantic fleet and our Pacific fleet might quickly pass from one coast to another. It would obviously be impossible for us to play the rôle of a World Power unless we had this short line of com-

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munication. But the conditions of peace, not less than the emergencies of war, called for a canal. International commerce, as well as our own, required the saving of thousands of miles of distance.

About 1880, the French under Count De Lesseps undertook to construct a canal from Panama to Aspinwall, but after half a dozen years the French company suspended work, partly for financial reasons, and partly on account of the enormous loss of life among the diggers from the pestilent nature of the climate and the country. Then followed a period of waiting, until it seemed certain that the French would never resume operations. American promoters pressed the claims of a route through Nicaragua where they could secure concessions. But it became clear that an enterprise of such far-reaching political importance as a trans-Isthmian canal, should be under governmental control. John Hay had been less than a year in the Department of State when he set about negotiating with England a treaty which should embody his ideas. In Sir Julian Pauncefote, the British Ambassador at Washington, he had a most congenial man to deal with. Both were gentlemen, both were firmly convinced that a canal must be constructed for the good of civilization, both held that to assure the friendship of the two great branches of the English-speaking race should be the transcendent aim of each.

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They soon made a draft of a treaty which was submitted to the Senate, but the Senators so amended it that the British Government refused to accept their amendments, and the project failed. Hay was so terribly chagrined at the Senate's interference that he wished to resign. There could be no doubt now, however, that if the canal had been undertaken on the terms of his first treaty, it would never have satisfied the United States and it would probably have been a continual source of international irritation. Roosevelt was at that time Governor of New York, and I quote the following letter from him to Hay because it shows how clearly he saw the objections to the treaty, and the fundamental principles for the control of an Isthmian canal:

Albany, Feb. 18, 1900

I hesitated long before I said anything about the treaty through sheer dread of two moments — that in which I should receive your note, and that in which I should receive Cabot's.[1] But I made up my mind that at least I wished to be on record; for to my mind this step is one backward, and it may be fraught with very great mischief. You have been the greatest Secretary of State I have seen in my time — Olney comes second — but at this moment I can not, try as I may, see that you are right. Understand me. When the treaty is adopted, as I suppose it will be, I shall put the best face possible on it, and shall back the Administration as heartily as ever, but oh, how I wish you and the President would drop the treaty and push through a bill to build *and fortify* our own canal.

[1] Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, who also opposed the first treaty.

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My objections are twofold. First, as to naval policy. If the proposed canal had been in existence in '98, the *Oregon* could have come more quickly through to the Atlantic; but this fact would have been far outweighed by the fact that Cervera's fleet would have had open to it the chance of itself going through the canal, and thence sailing to attack Dewey or to menace our stripped Pacific Coast. If that canal is open to the warships of an enemy, it is a menace to us in time of war; it is an added burden, an additional strategic point to be guarded by our fleet. If fortified by us, it becomes one of the most potent sources of our possible sea strength. Unless so fortified it strengthens against us every nation whose fleet is larger than our own. One prime reason for fortifying our great seaports, is to unfetter our fleet, to release it for offensive purposes; and the proposed canal would fetter it again, for our fleet would have to watch it, and therefore do the work which a fort should do; and what it could do much better.

Secondly, as to the Monroe Doctrine. If we invite foreign powers to a joint ownership, a joint guarantee, of what so vitally concerns us but a little way from our borders, how can we possibly object to similar joint action, say in Southern Brazil or Argentina, where our interests are so much less evident? If Germany has the same right that we have in the canal across Central America, why not in the partition of any part of Southern America? To my mind, we should consistently refuse to all European powers the right to control in any shape, any territory in the Western Hemisphere which they do not already hold.

As for existing treaties — I do not admit the "dead hand" of the treaty-making power in the past. A treaty can always be honorably abrogated — though it must never be abrogated in dishonest fashion.[1]

Fortunately, Lord Salisbury, the British Prime Minister, remained benevolently disposed towards

[1] W. R. Thayer: *John Hay*, II, 339–41.

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the Isthmian Canal, and in the following year he consented to take up the subject again. A new treaty embodying the American amendments and the British objections was drafted, and passed the Senate a few months after Roosevelt became President. Its vital provisions were, that it abrogated the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty and gave to the United States full ownership and control of the proposed canal.

This was the second illustration of Roosevelt's masterfulness in cutting through a diplomatic knot. Arrangements for constructing the Canal itself forced on him a third display of his dynamic quality which resulted in the most hotly discussed act of his career.

The French Canal Company was glad to sell to the American Government its concessions on the Isthmus, and as much of the Canal as it had dug, for $40,000,000. It had originally bought its concession from the Government of Colombia, which owned the State of Panama. At first the Colombian rulers seemed glad, and they sent an accredited agent, Dr. Herran, to Washington, who framed with Secretary Hay a treaty satisfactory to both, and believed, by Mr. Hay, to represent the sincere intentions of the Colombian Government at Bogotá. The Colombian politicians, however, who were banditti of the Tammany stripe, but as much cruder as Bogotá was than New York City, suddenly discovered that the trans-

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action might be much more profitable for themselves than they had at first suspected. They put off ratifying the treaty, therefore, and warned the French Company that they should charge it an additional $10,000,000 for the privilege of transferring its concession to the Americans. The French demurred; the Americans waited. Secretary Hay reminded Dr. Herran that the treaty must be signed within a reasonable time, and intimated that the reasonable time would soon be up.

The Bogotán blackmailers indulged in still wilder dreams of avarice; like the hasheesh-eater, they completely lost contact with reality and truth. In one of their earlier compacts with the French Company they stipulated that, if the Canal were not completed by a certain day in 1904, the entire concession and undertaking should revert to the Colombian Government. As it was now September, 1903, it did not require the wits of a political bandit to see that, by staving off an agreement with the United States for a few months, Colombia could get possession of property and privileges which the French were selling to the Americans for $40,000,000. So the Colombian Parliament adjourned in October, 1903, without even taking up the Hay-Herran Treaty.

Meanwhile the managers of the French Company became greatly alarmed at the prospect of losing the

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sum which the United States had agreed to pay for its rights and diggings, and it took steps to avert this total loss. The most natural means which occurred to it, the means which it adopted, was to incite a revolution in the State of Panama. To understand the affair truly, the reader must remember that Panama had long been the chief source of wealth to the Republic of Colombia. The mountain gentry who conducted the Colombian Government at Bogotá treated Panama like a conquered province, to be squeezed to the utmost for the benefit of the politicians. There was neither community of interest nor racial sympathy between the Panamanians and the Colombians, and, as it required a journey of fifteen days to go from Panama to the Capital, geography, also, added its sundering influence. Quite naturally the Panamanians, in the course of less than half a century, had made more than fifty attempts to revolt from Colombia and establish their own independence. The most illiterate of them could understand that, if they were independent, the money which they received and passed on to Bogotá, for the bandits there to spend, would remain in their own hands. An appeal to their love of liberty, being coupled with so obvious an appeal to their pockets, was irresistible.

Just what devices the French Company employed

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to instigate revolution, can be read in the interesting work of M. Bunau-Varilla, one of the most zealous officers of the French Company, who had devoted his life to achieving the construction of the Trans-Isthmian Canal. He was indefatigable, breezy, and deliberately indiscreet. He tells much, and what he does not tell he leaves you to infer, without risk of going astray. Mr. William Nelson Cromwell, of New York, the general counsel of the Company, offset Varilla's loquacity by a proper amount of reticence. Bunau-Varilla hurried over from Paris, and had interviews with President Roosevelt and Secretary Hay, but could not draw them into his conspiracy. The President told him that, at the utmost, he would only order American warships, which were on the Panama coast, to prevent any attack from outside which might cause bloodshed and interfere with the undisturbed passage across the Isthmus, a duty which the United States was pledged to perform.

The French zealot-conspirator freely announced that the revolution at Panama would take place at noon on November 3d. It did take place as scheduled without violence, and with only the accidental killing of a Chinaman and a dog. The next day the Revolutionists proclaimed the Republic of Panama, and on November 6th the United States formally recognized its existence and prepared to open diplomatic rela-

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tions with it. The Colombian Government had tried to send troops to put down the rebellion, but the American warships, obeying their orders to prevent bloodshed or fighting, would not allow the troops to land.

As soon as the news of these events reached Bogotá, the halls of Parliament there resounded with wailing and gnashing of teeth and protests, and curses on the perfidious Americans who had connived to free the Panamanians in their struggle for liberty. The mountain bandits perceived that they had overreached themselves. Instead of the $10,000,000 which their envoy Herran had deemed sufficient; instead of the $40,000,000 and more, which their greed had counted on in 1904, they would receive nothing. The Roosevelt Government immediately signed a contract with the Republic of Panama, by which the United States leased a zone across the Isthmus for building, controlling, and operating, the Canal. Then the Colombians, in a panic, sent their most respectable public man, and formerly their President, General Rafael Reyes, to Washington, to endeavor to persuade the Government to reverse its compact with the Panama Republic. The blackmailers were now very humble. Mr. Wayne MacVeagh, who was counsel for Colombia, told me that General Reyes was authorized to accept $8,000,000

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for all the desired concessions, "and," Mr. MacVeagh added, "he would have taken five millions, but Hay and Roosevelt were so foolish that they would n't accept."

The quick decisions of the Administration in Washington, which accompanied the revolution in Panama and the recognition of the new Republic, were made by Roosevelt. I have seen no evidence that Mr. Hay was consulted at the last moment. When the stroke was accomplished, many good persons in the United States denounced it. They felt that it was high-handed and brutal, and that it fixed an indelible blot on the national conscience. Many of them did not know of the long-drawn-out negotiations and of the Colombian premeditated deceit; others knew, but overlooked or condoned. They upheld strictly the letter of the law. They could not deny that the purpose of the Colombians was to exact blackmail. It meant nothing to them that Herran, the official envoy, had drawn up and signed a treaty under instructions from Marroquin, the President of Colombia, and its virtual dictator, who, having approved of the orders under which Herran acted, could easily have required the Colombian Parliament to ratify the treaty. Perfervidly pious critics of Roosevelt pictured him as a bully without conscience, and they blackened his aid in freeing the

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Panamanians by calling it "the Rape of Panama." Some of these persons even boldly asserted that John Hay died of remorse over his part in this wicked deed. The fact is that John Hay died of a disease which was not caused by remorse, and that, as long as he lived, he publicly referred to the Panama affair as that in which he took the greatest pride. It is only in the old Sunday-School stories that Providence punishes wrongdoing with such commendable swiftness, and causes the naughty boy who goes skating on Sunday to drown forthwith; in real life the "mills of God grind slowly." Roosevelt always regarded with equal satisfaction the decision by which the Panama Canal was achieved and the high needs of civilization and the protection of the United States were attended to. He lived long enough to condemn the proposal of some of our morbidly conscientious people, hypnotized by the same old crafty Colombians, to pay Colombia a gratuity five times greater than that which General Reyes would have thankfully received in December, 1903.

Persons of different temperaments, but of equal patriotism and sincerity, will probably pass different verdicts on this incident for a long time to come. Mr. Leupp quotes a member of Roosevelt's Administration as stating four alternative courses the President might have followed. First, he might have

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let matters drift until Congress met, and then sent a message on the subject, shifting the responsibility from his own shoulders to those of the Congressmen. Secondly, he might have put down the rebellion and restored Panama to Colombia; but this would have been to subject them against their will to a foreign enemy — an enormity the Anti-Imperialists were still decrying in our holding the Philippines against the will of their inhabitants. Thirdly, he might have withdrawn American warships and left Colombia to fight it out with the Panamanians — but this would have involved bloodshed, tumult, and interruption of transit across the Isthmus, which the United States, by the agreement of 1846, were bound to prevent. Finally, he might recognize any *de facto* government ready and willing to transact business — and this he did.[1]

That the Colombian politicians, who repudiated the treaty Herran had framed, were blackmailers of the lowest sort, is as indisputable as is the fact that whoever begins to compromise with a blackmailer is lured farther and farther into a bog until he is finally swallowed up. Americans should know also that during the summer and autumn of 1903, German agents were busy in Bogotá, and that, since German capitalists had openly announced their desire to buy up

[1] Leupp, 10–11.

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the French Company's concession, we may guess that they did not urge Colombia to fulfill her obligation to the United States.

Many years later I discussed the transaction with Mr. Roosevelt, chaffing him with being a wicked conspirator. He laughed, and replied: "What was the use? The other fellows in Paris and New York had taken all the risk and were doing all the work. Instead of trying to run a parallel conspiracy, I had only to sit still and profit by their plot — if it succeeded." He said also that he had intended issuing a public announcement that, if Colombia by a given date refused to come to terms, he would seize the Canal Zone in behalf of civilization. I told him I rather wished that he had accomplished his purpose in that way; but he answered that events matured too quickly, and that, in any case, where swift action was required, the Executive and not Congress must decide.

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CHAPTER XII

THE GREAT CRUSADE AT HOME

THESE early diplomatic settlements in Roosevelt's Administration showed the world that the United States now had a President who did not seek quarrels, but who was not afraid of them, who never bluffed, because — unlike President Cleveland and Secretary Olney with their Venezuela Message in 1895 — he never made a threat which he could not back up at the moment. There was no longer a bed of roses to stifle opposition; whosoever hit at the United States would encounter a barrier of long, sharp, and unbending thorns.

These particular achievements in foreign affairs, and others which I shall mention later, gave Roosevelt and his country great prestige abroad and the admiration of a large part of his countrymen. But his truly significant work related to home affairs. Now at last, he, the young David of the New Ideals, was to go forth, if he dared, and do battle with the Goliath of Conservatism. With him there was no question of daring. He had been waiting for twenty years for this opportunity. Such a conflict or duel has rarely been witnessed, because it rarely happens that

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an individual who consciously embodies the aims of an epoch is accepted by that epoch as its champion. Looking backward, we see that Abraham Lincoln typified the ideals of Freedom and Union which were the supreme issues of his time; but this recognition has come chiefly since his death. In like fashion I believe that Roosevelt's significance as a champion of Liberty, little suspected by his contemporaries and hardly surmised even now, will require the lapse of another generation before it is universally understood.

Many obvious reasons account for this. Most of the internal reforms which Roosevelt struggled for lacked the dramatic quality or the picturesqueness which appeals to average, dull, unimaginative men and women. The heroism of the medical experimenter who voluntarily contracts yellow fever and dies — and thereby saves myriads of lives — makes little impression on the ordinary person, who can be roused only by stories of battle heroism, of soldiers and torpedoes. And yet the attacks which Roosevelt made, while they did not involve death, called for the highest kind of civic courage and fortitude.

Then again a political combat with tongues and arguments seldom conveys the impression that through it irrevocable Fate gives its decision to the same extent that a contest by swords and volleys

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PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT IN THE WHITE HOUSE

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does. Political campaigns are a competition of parties and only the immediate partisans who direct and carry on the fight, grow very hot. The great majority of a party is not fanatical, and a citizen who has witnessed many elections, some for and some against him, comes instinctively to feel that whoever wins the country is safe. He discounts the cries of alarm and the abuse by opponents. And only in his most expansive moments does he flatter himself that his party really represents the State. The Republican Party, through which President Roosevelt had to work, was by no means an ideal instrument. He believed in Republicanism, with a faith only less devoted than that with which he embraced the fundamental duties and spiritual facts of life. But the Republicanism which he revered must be interpreted by himself; and the party which bore the name Republican was split into several sections, mutually discordant if not actually hostile. It seems no exaggeration to say that the underlying motive of the majority of the Republican Party during Roosevelt's Presidency was to uphold Privilege, just as much as the underlying purpose of the great Whig Party in England in the eighteenth century was to uphold Aristocracy. Roosevelt's purpose, on the contrary, was to clip the arrogance of Privilege based on Plutocracy. To achieve this he must, in some measure,

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compel the party of Plutocracy to help him. I speak, so far as possible, as a historian, — and not as a partisan, — who recognizes that the rise of a Plutocracy was the inevitable result of the amassing, during a generation, of unprecedented wealth, and that, in a Republic governed by parties, the all-dominant Plutocracy would naturally see to it that the all-dominant party which governed the country and made its laws should be plutocratic. If the spheres in which Plutocracy made most of its money had been Democratic, then the Democratic Party would have served the Plutocracy. As it was, in the practical relation between the parties, the Democrats got their share of the spoils, and the methods of a Democratic Boss, like Senator Gorman, did not differ from those of a Republican Boss, like Senator Aldrich.

Roosevelt relied implicitly on justice and common sense. He held, as firmly as Lincoln had held, to the inherent rightmindedness of the "plain people." And however fierce and formidable the opposition to his policies might be in Congress, he trusted that, if he could make clear to the average voters of the country what he was aiming at, they would support him. And they did support him. Time after time, when the Interests appeared to be on the point of crushing his reform, the people rose and coerced Congress into adopting it. I would not imply that Roosevelt

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assumed an autocratic manner in this warfare. He left no doubt of his intention, still less could he disguise the fact of his tremendous personal vigor; but rather than threaten he tried to persuade; he was good-natured to everybody, he explained the reasonableness of his measures; and only when the satraps of Plutocracy so far lost their discretion as to threaten him, did he bluntly challenge them to do their worst.

The Interests had undeniably reached such proportions that unless they were chastened and controlled, the freedom of the Republic could not survive. And yet, in justice, we must recall that when they grew up in the day of small things, they were beneficial; their founders had no idea of their becoming a menace to the Nation. The man who built the first cotton-mill in his section, or started the first iron-furnace, or laid the first stretch of railroad, was rightly hailed as a benefactor; and he could not foresee that the time would come when his mill, entering into a business combination with a hundred other mills in different parts of the country, would be merged in a monopoly to strangle competition in cotton manufacture. Likewise, the first stretch of railroad joined another, and this a third, and so on, until there had arisen a vast railway system under a single management from New York to San Fran-

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cisco. Now, while these colossal monopolies had grown up so naturally, responding to the wonderful expansion of the population they served, the laws and regulations which applied to them, having been framed in the days when they were young and small and harmless, still obtained. The clothes made for the little boy would not do for the giant man. I have heard a lawyer complain that statutes, which barely sufficed when travel and transportation went by stage-coach, were stretched to fit the needs of the public in its relation with transcontinental railroads. This is an exaggeration, no doubt, but it points towards truth. The Big Interests were so swollen that they went ahead on their own affairs and paid little attention to the community on which they were battening. They saw to it that if any laws concerning them had to be made by the State Legislatures or by Congress, their agents in those bodies should make them. A certain Mr. Vanderbilt, the president of one of the largest railroad systems in America, a person whose other gems of wit and wisdom have not been recorded, achieved such immortality, as it is, by remarking, "The public be damned." Probably the president and directors of a score of other monopolies would have heartily echoed that impolitic and petulant display of arrogance. Impolitic the exclamation was, because the American public had already

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begun to feel that the Big Interests were putting its freedom in jeopardy, and it was beginning to call for laws which should reduce the power of those interests.

As early as 1887 the Interstate Commerce Act was passed, the earliest considerable attempt to regulate rates and traffic. Then followed anti-trust laws which aimed at the suppression of "pools," in which many large producers or manufacturers combined to sell their staples at a uniform price, a practice which inevitably set up monopolies. The "Trusts" were to these what the elephant is to a colt. When the United States Steel Corporation was formed by uniting eleven large steel plants, with an aggregate capital of $1,100,000,000, the American people had an inkling of the magnitude to which Trusts might swell. In like fashion when the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern Railroads found a legal impediment to their being run by one management, they got round the law by organizing the Northern Securities Company, which was to hold the stocks and bonds of both railroads. And so of many other important industrial and transportation mergers. The most powerful financial promoters of the country, led by Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, were busy setting up these combinations on a large scale and the keenest corporation lawyers spent their energy and wits in

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framing charters which obeyed the letter of the laws, but wholly denied their spirit.

President Roosevelt worked openly, with a definite purpose. First, he would enforce every law on the statute book, without exception in favor of any individual or company; next, he suggested to Congress the need of new legislation to resist further encroachments by capitalists in the fields where they had already been checked; finally, he pointed out that Congress must begin at once to protect the national resources which had been allowed to go to waste, or to be seized and exploited by private concerns.

I do not intend to take up in chronological sequence, or in detail, Roosevelt's battles to secure proper legislation. To do so would require the discussion of legal and constitutional questions, which would scarcely fit a sketch like the present. The main things to know are the general nature of his reforms and his own attitude in conducting the fight. He aimed directly at stopping abuses which gave a privileged few undue advantage in amassing and distributing wealth. The practical result of the laws was to spread justice and equality throughout the country and to restore thereby the true spirit of Democracy on which the Founders created the Republic. He fought fairly, but warily, never letting

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slip a point that would tell against his opponents, who, it must be said, did not always attack him honorably.

At first, they regarded the President as a headstrong young man — he was the youngest who had ever sat in the Presidential chair — who wished to have his own way in order to show the country that he was its leader. They did not see that ideals which dated back to his childhood were really shaping his acts. He had seen law in the making out West; he had seen law, and especially corporation law, in the making when he was in the New York Assembly and Governor of New York; he knew the devices by which the Interests caused laws to be made and passed for their special benefit, or evaded inconvenient laws. But he suffered no disillusion as to the ideal of Law, the embodiment and organ of Justice. Legal quibbles, behind which designing and wicked men dodged, nauseated him, and he made no pretense of wishing to uphold them.

The champions of the Interests found out before long that the young President was neither headstrong nor a mere creature of impulse, but that he followed a thoroughly rational system of principles; and so they had to abandon the notion that the next gust of impulse might blow him over to their side. They must take him as he was, and make the best

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of it. Now, I must repeat, that, for these gentlemen, the very idea that anybody could propose to run the American Government, or to organize American Society, on any other standard than theirs, seemed to them preposterous. The Bourbon nobles in France and in Italy were not more amazed when the Revolutionists proposed to sweep them away than were the American Plutocrats of the Rooseveltian era when he promoted laws to regulate them. The Bourbon thinks the earth will perish unless Bourbonism governs it; the American Plutocrat thought that America existed simply to enrich him. He clung to his rights and privileges with the tenacity of a drowning man clinging to a plank, and he deceived himself into thinking that, in desperately trying to save himself and his order, he was saving Society.

Most tragic of all, to one who regards history as the revelation of the unfolding of the moral nature of mankind, was the fact that these men had not the slightest idea that they were living in a moral world, or that a new influx of moral inspiration had begun to permeate Society in its politics, its business, and its daily conduct. The great ship Privilege, on which they had voyaged with pomp and satisfaction, was going down and they knew it not.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE TWO ROOSEVELTS

I DO not wish to paint Roosevelt in one light only, and that the most favorable. Had no other been shed upon him, his Administration would have been too bland for human belief, and life for him would have palled. For his inexhaustible energy hungered for action. As soon as his judgment convinced him that a thing ought to be done he set about doing it. Recently, I asked one of the most perspicacious members of his Cabinet, "What do you consider Theodore's dominant trait?" He thought for a while, and then replied, "Combativeness." No doubt the public also, at least while Roosevelt was in office, thought of him first as a fighter. The idea that he was truculent or pugnacious, that he went about with a chip on his shoulder, that he loved fighting for the sake of fighting, was, however, a mistake. During the eight years he was President he kept the United States out of war; not only that, he settled long-standing causes of irritation, such as the dispute over the Alaskan Boundary, which might, under provocation, have led to war. Even more than this, without striking

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a blow, he repelled the persistent attempts of the German Emperor to gain a foothold on this continent; he repelled those snakelike attacks and forced the Imperial Bully, not merely to retreat ignominiously but to arbitrate. And in foreign affairs, Roosevelt shone as a peacemaker. He succeeded in persuading the Russian Czar to come to terms with the Mikado of Japan. And soon after, when the German Emperor threatened to make war on France, a letter from Roosevelt to him caused William to reconsider his brutal plan, and to submit the Moroccan dispute to a conference of the Powers at Algeciras.

Instead of the braggart and brawler that his enemies mispainted him, I saw in Roosevelt, rather, a strong man who had taken early to heart Hamlet's maxim and had steadfastly practiced it:

> "Rightly to be great
> Is not to stir without great argument,
> But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
> When honour's at the stake."

He himself summed up this part of his philosophy in a phrase which has become a proverb: "Speak softly, but carry a big stick." More than once in his later years he quoted this to me, adding, that it was precisely because this or that Power knew that he carried a big stick, that he was enabled to speak softly with effect.

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No man of our time better deserved the Nobel Peace Prize than did he. The fallacy that Roosevelt, like the proverbial Irishman at Donnybrook Fair, had rather fight than eat, spread through the country, and indeed throughout the world, and had its influence in determining whether men voted for him or not. His enemies used it as proof that he was not a safe President, but they took means much more malignant than this to discredit and destroy him. When the Big Interests discovered that they could not silence him, they circulated stories of all kinds that would have rendered even the archangel Gabriel suspect to some worthy dupes.

They threw doubts, for instance, on his sanity, and one heard that the "Wall Street magnates" employed the best alienists in the country to analyze everything the President did and said, in the hope of accumulating evidence to show that he was too unbalanced to be President. Not content with stealing away his reputation for mental competence, they shot into the dark the gravest charges against his honor. A single story, still believed, as I know, by persons of eminence in their professions, will illustrate this. When one of the great contests between the President and the Interests was on, he remembered that one of their representatives in New York had damaging, confidential letters from him. Hear-

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ing that these might be produced, Roosevelt telephoned one of his trusty agents to break open the desk of the Captain of Industry where they were kept, and to bring them to the White House, before ten o'clock the following morning. This was done. To believe that the President of the United States would engage in a vulgar robbery of the jimmy and black-mask sort indicates a degree of credulity which even the alienists could hardly have expected to encounter outside of their asylums. It suggests also, that Baron Münchausen, like the Wandering Jew Ahasuerus, has never died. Does any one suppose that the person whose desk was rifled would have kept quiet? Or that, if the Interests had had even reasonably sure evidence of the President's guilt, they would not have published it? To set spies and detectives upon him with orders to trail him night and day was, according to rumor, an obvious expedient for his enemies to employ.

I repeat these stories, not because I believe them, but because many persons did, and such gossip, like the cruel slanders whispered against President Cleveland years before, gained some credence. Roosevelt was so natural, so unguarded, in his speech and ways, that he laid himself open to calumny. The delight he took in establishing the Ananias Club, and the rapidity with which he found new members for it, seemed

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to justify strong doubts as to his temper and taste, if not as to his judgment. The vehemence of his public speaking, which was caused in part by a physical difficulty of utterance — the sequel of his early asthmatic trouble — and in part by his extraordinary vigor, created among some of the hearers who did not know him the impression that he must be a hard drinker, or that he drank to stimulate his eloquence. After he retired from office, his enemies, in order to undermine his further political influence, sowed the falsehood that he was a drunkard. I do not recall that they ever suggested that he used his office for his private profit — there are some things too absurd for even malice to suggest — but he had reason enough many times to calm himself by reflecting that his Uncle Jimmy Bulloch, the best of men, believed just such lies, and the most atrocious insinuations, against Mr. Gladstone.

Of course, nearly all public men have to undergo similar virulent defamation. I have heard a well-known publicist, a lawyer of ability, argue that both George Washington and Abraham Lincoln did not escape from what seems now incredible abuse, and that they were, nevertheless, the noblest of men and peerless patriots; and then he went on to argue that President Woodrow Wilson has been the target of similar malignity, and to leave you to conclude that

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consequently Wilson is in the same class with Washington and Lincoln. If he had put his thesis in a different form, the publicist might have seen himself, as his hearers did, the absurdity of it. Suppose he had said, for instance: "In spite of the fact that Washington and Lincoln each kept a cow, they were both peerless patriots, therefore, as President Wilson keeps a cow, he must be a peerless patriot." One fears that logic is somewhat neglected even in the training of lawyers in our day.

The commonest charge against Roosevelt, and the one which seemed, on the surface at least, to be most plausible, was that he was devoured by insatiable ambition. The critical remarked that wherever he went he was always the central figure. The truth is, that he could no more help being the central figure than a lion could in any gathering of lesser creatures; the fact that he was Roosevelt decided that. He did use the personal pronoun "I," and the possessive pronoun "My," with such frequency as to irritate good persons who were quite as egotistical as he — if that be egotism — but who used such modest circumlocutions as "the present writer," or "one," to camouflage their self-conceit. Roosevelt enjoyed almost all his experiences with equal zest, and he expressed his enjoyment without reserve. He was quite as well aware of his foibles as his crit-

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ics were, and he made merry over them. Probably nobody laughed more heartily than he at the pleasantly humorous remark of one of his boys: "Father never likes to go to a wedding or a funeral, because he can't be the bride at the wedding or the corpse at the funeral."

Ambition he had, the ambition which every healthy-minded man ought to have to deserve the good-will and approbation of his fellows. This he admitted over and over again, and he made no pretense of not taking satisfaction from the popularity his countrymen showered upon him. In writing to a friend that he wished to be a candidate in 1904, he distinguished between the case of Lincoln in 1864 and that of himself and other Presidential candidates for renomination. In 1864, the crisis was so tremendous that Lincoln must have considered that chiefly, irrespective of his own hopes: whereas Roosevelt in 1904, like Jackson, Grant, Cleveland, and the other two-term Presidents, might, without impropriety, look upon reëlection as, in a measure, a personal tribute.

One of my purposes in writing this sketch will have failed, if I have not made clear the character of Roosevelt's ambition. He could not be happy unless he were busily at work. If that work were in a public office he was all the happier. But the way in which

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he accepted one office after another, each unrelated to the preceding, was so desultory as to prove that he did not begin life with a deep-laid design on the Presidency. He got valuable political notoriety as an Assemblyman, but that was, as I have so often said, because he could not be inconspicuous anywhere. He took the office of Civil Service Commissioner, although everybody regarded that as a commonplace field bounded on three sides by political oblivion; and only a dreamer could have supposed that his service as Chief Police Commissioner of New York City could lead to the White House. Only when he became Assistant Secretary of the Navy can he be said to have come within striking distance of the great target. In enlisting in the Spanish War and organizing the Rough Riders, he may well have reflected that military prowess has often favored a Presidential candidacy; but even here, his sense of patriotic duty and his desire to experience the soldier's life were almost indisputably his chief motives. As Governor of New York, however, he could not disguise from himself the fact that that position might prove again, as it had proved in the case of Cleveland, the stepping-stone to the Presidency. On finding, however, that Platt and the Bosses, exasperated by him as Governor, wished to get rid of him by making him Vice-President, and knowing that in the normal

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course of events a Vice-President never became President, he tried to refuse nomination to the lower office. And only when he perceived that the masses of the people, the country over, and not merely the Bosses, insisted on nominating him, did he accept. This brief summary of his political progress assuredly does not bear out the charge that he was the victim of uncontrollable ambition.

Roosevelt's Ananias Club caught the imagination of the country, but not always favorably. Those whom he elected into it, for instance, did not relish the notoriety. Others thought that it betokened irritation in him, and that a man in his high position ought not to punish persons who were presumably trustworthy by branding them so conspicuously. In fact, I suppose, he sometimes applied the brand too hastily, under the spur of sudden resentment. The most open of men himself, he had no hesitation in commenting on anybody or any topic with the greatest indiscretion. For he took it for granted that even the strangers who heard him would hold his remarks as confidential. When, therefore, one of his hearers went outside and reported in public what the President had said, Roosevelt disavowed it, and put the babbler in the Ananias class. What a President wishes the public to know, he tells it himself. What he utters in private should, in honor, be held as confidential.

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When I say that Roosevelt was astonishingly open, I do not mean that he blurted out everything, for he always knew the company with whom he talked, and if there were any among them with whom it would be imprudent to risk an indiscretion, he took care to talk "for safety." With him, a secret was a secret, and he could be as silent as an unopened Egyptian tomb. Certain diplomatic affairs he did not lisp, even to his Secretary of State. So far as appears, John Hay knew nothing about the President's interviews with the German Ambassador Holleben, which forced William II to arbitrate. And he sometimes prepared a bill for Congress without consulting his Cabinet, for fear that the stock-jobbers might get wind of it and bull or bear the market with the news.

Before passing on, I must remark that some cases of apparent mendacity or inaccuracy on the part of a President — especially if he were as voluble and busy as Roosevelt — must be attributed to forgetfulness or misunderstanding and not to wilful lying. A person coming from an interview with him might construe as a promise the kindly remarks with which the President wished to soften a refusal. The promise, which was no promise, not being kept, the suppliant accused the President of faithlessness or falsehood. McKinley, it was said, could say no

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to three different seekers for the same office so balmily that each of them went away convinced that he was the successful applicant. Yet McKinley escaped the charge of mendacity and Roosevelt, who deserved it far less, did not.

In his writings and speeches, Roosevelt uttered his opinions so candidly that we need not fall back on breaches of confidence to explain why his opponents were maddened by them. Plutocrats and monopolists might well wince at being called "malefactors of great wealth," "the wealthy criminal class." Such expressions had the virtue, from the point of view of rhetoric, of being so descriptive that anybody could visualize them. They stung; they shed indefinable odium on a whole class; and, no doubt, this was just what Roosevelt intended. To many critics they seemed cruel, because, instead of allowing for exceptions, they huddled all plutocrats together, the virtuous and the vicious alike. And so with the victims of his phrase, "undesirable citizens." I marvel rather, however, that Roosevelt, given his extraordinary talent of flashing epithets and the rush of his indignation when he was doing battle for a good cause, displayed as much moderation as he did. Had he been a demagogue, he would have roused the masses against the capitalists and have goaded them to such a pitch of hatred that

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they would have looked to violence, bloodshed, and injustice, as the remedy they must apply.

But Roosevelt was farthest removed from the Revolutionists of the vulgar, red-handed class. He consecrated his life to prevent Revolution. All his action in the conflict between Labor and Capital aimed at conciliation. He told the plutocrats their defects with brutal frankness, and if he promoted laws to curb them, it was because he realized, as they did not, that, unless they mended their ways, they would bring down upon themselves a Socialist avalanche which they could not withstand. What set the seal of consecration on his work was his treatment of Labor with equal justice. Unlike the demagogue, he did not flatter the "horny-handed sons of toil" or obsequiously do the bidding of railroad brotherhoods, or pretend that the capitalist had no rights, and that all workingmen were good merely because they worked. On the contrary, he told them that no class was above the law; he warned them that if Labor attempted to get its demands by violence, he would put it down. He ridiculed the idea that honest citizenship depends on the more or less money a man has in his pocket. "A man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country," Roosevelt said in a Fourth-of-July speech at Springfield, Illinois, in 1903, "is good enough to be given

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a square deal afterward. More than that no man is entitled to, and less than that no man shall have."

That phrase, "a square deal," stuck in the hearts of the American people. It summed up what they regarded as Roosevelt's most characteristic trait. He was the man of the square deal, who instinctively resented injustice done to those who could not protect themselves; the friend of the under dog, the companion of the self-reliant and the self-respecting. It is under this aspect that Roosevelt seems most likely to live in popular history.

So, from the time he became President, the public was divided into believing that there were two Roosevelts. His enemies made almost a monster of him, denouncing and fearing him as violent, rash, pugnacious, egotistical, ogreish in his mad hatred of Capital, and Capitalists condemned him as hypocritical, cruel, lying, and vindictive. The other side, however, insisted on his courage; he was a fighter, but he always fought to defend the weak and to uphold the right; he was equally unmoved by Bosses and by demagogues; in his human relations he regarded only what a man was, not his class or condition; he had a great-hearted, jovial simplicity; a far-seeing and steadfast patriotism; he preached the Square Deal and he practiced it; even more than Lincoln he was accessible to every one.

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CHAPTER XIV

THE PRESIDENT AND THE KAISER

DURING the first years of Roosevelt's Administration he had to encounter many conditions which existed rather from the momentum they had from the past than from any living vigor of their own. It was a time of transition. The group of politicians dating from the Civil War was nearly extinct, and the leaders who had come to the front after 1870 were also much thinned in number, and fast dropping off. Washington itself was becoming one of the most beautiful cities in the world, with its broad avenues, seldom thronged, its circles and squares, whose frequenters seemed never busy, its spirit of leisure, its suggestion of opulence and amplitude, and of a not too zealous or disturbing hold on reality. You still saw occasionally a tiny cottage inhabited by a colored family cuddled up against a new and imposing palace, just as you might pass a colored mammy on the same sidewalk with a millionaire Senator, for the residential section had not yet been socially standardized.

Only a few years before, under President Cleveland, a single telephone sufficed for the White House,

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and as the telephone operator stopped work at six o'clock, the President himself or some member of his family had to answer calls during the evening. A single secretary wrote in long hand most of the Presidential correspondence. Examples of similar primitiveness might be found almost everywhere, and the older generation seemed to imagine that a certain slipshod and dozing quality belonged to the very idea of Democracy. If you were neatly dressed and wide awake, you would inevitably be remarked among your fellows; such remark would imply superiority; and to be superior was supposedly to be undemocratic.

Nevertheless this was a time of transition, and the vigor which emanated from the young President passed like electricity through all lines and hastened the change. He caused the White House to be remodeled and fitted on the one hand for social purposes which required much more spacious accommodation, and on the other for offices in which he could conduct the largely increased Presidential business. Instead of one telephone there were many working night and day, and instead of a single long-hand secretary, there were a score of stenographers and typists. Before he left Washington he saw a vast Union Station erected instead of the overgrown shanties at Sixth Street, and he had encour-

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aged the laying-out of the waste places beyond the Capitol, thus adding to the city another and imposing section. His interest did not stop at politics, nor at carrying through the reforms he had at heart. He attended with equal keenness and solicitude to external improvements.

Now at first, as I have suggested, his chief duty was to continue President McKinley's policies, which concerned mostly the establishment of our insular dependencies, and the readjustment of our diplomatic relations. I have described how he closed the dispute over the Alaskan Boundary, over our joint control with England over the Isthmus of Panama, and how he circumvented the attempt of the Colombian blackmailers to block our construction of the Canal.

We must now glance at a matter of almost equal importance — our relations with Germany. The German attack on civilization, which was openly delivered in 1914, revealed to the world that for twenty years before the German Emperor had been secretly preparing his mad project of Universal Conquest. We see now that he used all sorts of base tools — German exchange professors, spies, bribers, conventional insinuators and corrupters, organizers of pro-German sentiment, and of societies of German-Americans. So little did he and his lackeys under-

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stand the American spirit that they assumed that at the given signal the people of the United States would gladly go over to them. He counted on securing North and South America by commerce and corruption, and not by armed force. The reaffirmation of the Monroe Doctrine by President Cleveland in 1895 seriously troubled him; for he contemplated planting German colonies in Central and South America without resistance, but the Monroe Doctrine in its latest interpretation forbade him or any foreign government from establishing dominion in either American continent. Still, two things comforted him: the Americans were, he thought, a loose, happy-go-lucky people, without any consecutive or deep-laid policy, as foolish republicans must be; and next, he knew that he had the most powerful army in the world, which, if put to the test, would crush the undisciplined American militia at the first onset. He adopted, therefore, a double policy: he pretended openly to be most friendly to the Americans; he flattered all of them whom he could reach in Berlin, and he directed an effusive propaganda in the United States. In secret, however, he lost no occasion to harm this country. When the Spanish War came in 1898, he tried to form a naval coalition of his fleet with those of France and England, and it was only the refusal of

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England to join in it which saved this country from disaster. The United States owe Mr. Balfour, who at that time controlled the British Foreign Office, an eternal debt of gratitude, because it was he who replied to the Kaiser's secret temptation: "No: if the British fleet takes any part in this war, it will be to put itself between the American fleet and those of your coalition."

The Kaiser expressed his real sentiment towards the United States in a remark which he made later, not expecting that it would reach American ears. "If I had had ships enough," he said, "I would have taken the Americans by the scruff of the neck." As it was, he showed his purpose to those who had eyes to see it, by ordering the German Squadron under Diederichs to go to Manila and take what he could there. Fortunately before he could take Manila or the Philippines he had to take the American Commodore, George Dewey, and when he discovered what sort of a sea-fighter the mountains of Vermont had produced in Dewey, he decided not to attack him. Perhaps also the fact that the English commander at Manila, Captain Chichester, stood ready to back up Dewey caused Diederichs to back down. The true Prussian truculence always oozes out when it has not a safe margin of superiority in strength on its side.

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The Kaiser was not to be foiled, however, in his determination to get a foothold in America. As the likelihood that the Panama Canal would be constructed became a certainty, he redoubled his efforts. He tried to buy from a Mexican Land Company two large ports in Lower California for "his personal use." These would have given him, of course, control over the approach to the Canal from the Pacific. Simultaneously he sent a surveying expedition to the Caribbean Sea, which found a spacious harbor, that might serve as a naval base, on an unoccupied island near the main line of vessels approaching the Canal from the east, but before he could plant a force there, the presence of his surveyors was discovered, and they sailed away.

He now resorted to a more cunning ruse. The people of Venezuela owed considerable sums to merchants and bankers in Germany, England, and Italy, and the creditors could recover neither their capital nor the interest on it. The Kaiser bethought himself of the simple plan of making a naval demonstration against the Venezuelans if they did not pay up; he would send his troops ashore, occupy the chief harbors, and take in the customs. To disguise his ulterior motive, he persuaded England and Italy to join him in collecting their bill against Venezuela. So warships of the three nations appeared off the

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Venezuelan coast, and for some time they maintained what they called "A peaceful blockade." After a while Secretary Hay pointed out that there could be no such thing as a peaceful blockade; that a blockade was, by its very nature, an act of war; accordingly the blockaders declared a state of belligerency between themselves and Venezuela, and Germany threatened to bombard the seacoast towns unless the debt was settled without further delay. President Roosevelt had no illusions as to what bombardment and occupation by German troops would mean. If a regiment or two of Germans once went into garrison at Caracas or Porto Cabello, the Kaiser would secure the foothold he craved on the American Coast within striking distance of the projected Canal, and Venezuela, unable to ward off his aggression, would certainly be helpless to drive him out. Mr. Roosevelt allowed Mr. Herbert W. Bowen, the American Minister to Venezuela, to serve as Special Commissioner for Venezuela in conducting her negotiations with Germany. He, himself, however, took the matter into his own hands at Washington. Having sounded England and Italy, and learned that they were willing to arbitrate, and knowing also that neither of them schemed to take territorial payment for their bills, he directed his diplomatic attack straight at the

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Kaiser. When the German Ambassador, Dr. von Holleben, one of the pompous and ponderous professorial sort of German officials, was calling on him at the White House, the President told him to warn the Kaiser that unless he consented, within a given time — about ten days — to arbitrate the Venezuelan dispute, the American fleet under Admiral Dewey would appear off the Venezuelan coast and defend it from any attack which the German Squadron might attempt to make. Holleben displayed consternation; he protested that since his Imperial Master had refused to arbitrate, there could be no arbitration. His Imperial Master could not change his Imperial Mind, and the dutiful servant asked the President whether he realized what such a demand meant. The President replied calmly that he knew it meant war.

A week passed, but brought no reply from Berlin; then Holleben called again at the White House on some unimportant matters; as he turned to go the President inquired, "Have you heard from Berlin?" "No," said Holleben. "Of course His Imperial Majesty cannot arbitrate." "Very well," said Roosevelt, "you may think it worth while to cable to Berlin that I have changed my mind. I am sending instructions to Admiral Dewey to take our fleet to Venezuela next Monday instead of Tuesday." Holleben brought the interview to a close at once and departed

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with evident signs of alarm. He returned in less than thirty-six hours with relief and satisfaction written on his face, as he informed the President, "His Imperial Majesty consents to arbitrate."

In order to screen the Kaiser's mortification from the world, Roosevelt declared that his transaction — which only he, the Kaiser, and Holleben knew about — should not be made public at the time; and he even went so far, a little later, in speaking on the matter as to refer to the German Emperor as a good friend and practicer of arbitration.

Many years later, when Roosevelt and I discussed this episode we cast about for reasons to account for the Kaiser's sudden back-down. We concluded that after the first interview Holleben either did not cable to Berlin at all, or he gave the message with his own comment that it was all a bluff. After the second interview, he consulted Buenz, the German Consul-General at New York, who knew Roosevelt well and knew also the powerfulness of Dewey's fleet. He assured Holleben that the President was not bluffing, and that Dewey could blow all the German Navy, then in existence, out of the water in half an hour. So Holleben sent a hot cablegram to Berlin, and Berlin understood that only an immediate answer would do.

Poor, servile, old bureaucrat Holleben! The Kaiser

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soon treated him as he was in the habit of treating any of his servile creatures, high or low, who made a fiasco. Deceived by the glowing reports which his agents in the United States sent to him, the Kaiser believed that the time was ripe for a visit by a Hohenzollern, to let off the pent-up enthusiasm of the German-Americans and to stimulate the pro-German conspiracy here. Accordingly Prince Henry of Prussia came over and made a whirlwind trip, as far as Chicago; but it was in no sense a royal progress. Multitudes flocked to see him out of curiosity, but Prince Henry realized, and so did the German kin here, that his mission had failed. A scapegoat must be found, and apparently Holleben was the chosen victim.

The Kaiser cabled him to resign and take the next day's steamer home, alleging "chronic illness" as an excuse. He sailed from Hoboken obediently, and there were none so poor as to do him reverence. The sycophants who had fawned upon him while he was enjoying the Imperial favor as Ambassador took care not to be seen waving a farewell to him from the pier. Instead of that, they were busy telling over his blunders. He had served French instead of German champagne at a banquet for Prince Henry, and he had allowed the Kaiser's yacht to be christened in French champagne. How could such a blunderer satisfy the

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diplomatic requirements of the vain and petty Kaiser? And yet! Holleben was utterly devoted and willing to grovel in the mud. He even suggested to President Roosevelt that at the State Banquet at the White House, Prince Henry, as a Hohenzollern, and the representative of the Almightiest Kaiser, should walk out to dinner first; but there was no discussion, for the President replied curtly, "No person living precedes the President of the United States in the White House."

Henceforth the Kaiser understood that the United States Government, at least as long as Roosevelt was President, would repel any attempt by foreigners to violate the Monroe Doctrine, and set up a nucleus of foreign power in either North or South America. He devoted himself all the more earnestly to pushing the sly work of peaceful penetration, that work of spying and lying in which the German people proved itself easily first. The diabolical propaganda, aimed not only at undermining the United States, at seducing the Irish and other hyphenate groups of Americans, but at polluting the Mexicans and several of the South American States; and later there was a thoroughly organized conspiracy to stir up animosity between this country and Japan by making the Japanese hate and suspect the Americans, and by making the Americans hate and suspect the

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Japanese. I alluded just now to the fact that German intrigue was working in Bogotá, and influenced the Colombian blackmailers in refusing to sign the Hay-Herran Canal Treaty with the United States, and peered about in the hope of snapping up the Canal rights for Germany.

Outwardly, during the first decade of the twentieth century, the Kaiser seemed to be most active in interfering in European politics, including those of Morocco, in which the French were entangled. In 1904 the war between Russia and Japan broke out. Roosevelt remained strictly neutral towards both belligerents, making it evident, however, that either or both of them could count on his friendly offices if they sought mediation. At the beginning of the war, it was generally assumed that the German Kaiser shed no tears over the Russian reverses, for the weaker Russia became, the less Germany needed to fear her as a neighbor. At length, however, when it looked as if the Japanese might actually shatter the Russian Empire, Germany and the other European Powers seemed to have had a common feeling that a decided victory by an Asiatic nation like Japan would certainly require a readjustment of world politics, and might not only put in jeopardy European interests and control in Asia, but also raise up against Europe what the Kaiser had already advertised as

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the Yellow Peril. I have no evidence that President Roosevelt shared this anxiety; on the contrary, I think that he was not unwilling that a strong Japan should exist to prevent the dismemberment of Eastern Asia by European land-grabbers.

By the spring of 1905, both Russia and Japan had fought almost to exhaustion. The probability was that Russia with her vast population could continue to replenish her army. Japan, with great pluck, after winning amazing victories, which left her weaker and weaker, made no sign of wishing for an armistice. Roosevelt, however, on his own motion wrote a private letter to the Czar, Nicholas II, and sent George Meyer, Ambassador to Italy, with it on a special mission to Petrograd. The President urged the Czar to consider making peace, since both the Russians and the Japanese had nearly fought themselves out, and further warfare would add to the losses and burdens, already tremendous, of both people. Probably he hinted also that another disaster in the field might cause an outbreak by the Russian Revolutionists. I have not seen his letter — perhaps a copy of it has escaped, in the Czar's secret archives, the violence of the Bolshevists — but I have heard him speak about it. I have reason to suppose also that he wrote privately to the Kaiser to use his influence with the Czar. At any rate, the Czar listened

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WITH THE RUSSO-JAPANESE PEACE DELEGATES ON BOARD THE PRESIDENTIAL YACHT MAYFLOWER, AUGUST 5, 1905

Left to right: M. Witte, Baron Rosen, President Roosevelt, Baron Komura, Minister Takahira

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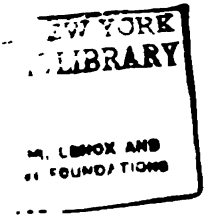

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to the President's advice, and by one of those diplomatic devices by which both parties saved their dignity, an armistice was arranged and, in the summer of 1905, the Peace was signed. The following year, the Trustees of the Nobel Peace Prize recognized Roosevelt's large part in stopping the war, by giving the Prize to him.

Meanwhile, the irritation between France and Germany had increased to the point where open rupture was feared. For years Germany had been waiting for a propitious moment to swoop down on France and overwhelm her. The French intrigues in Morocco, which were leading visibly to a French Protectorate over that country, aroused German resentment, for the Germans coveted Morocco themselves. The Kaiser went so far as to invite Roosevelt to interfere with him in Morocco, but this, the President replied, was impossible. Probably he was not unwilling to have the German Emperor understand that, while the United States would interfere with all their might to prevent a foreign attack on the Monroe Doctrine, they meant to keep their hands off in European quarrels. That he also had a clear idea of William II's temperament appears from the following opinion which I find in a private letter of his at this time: "The Kaiser had weekly pipe dreams."

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The situation grew very angry, and von Bülow, the German Chancellor, did not hide his purpose of upholding the German pretensions, even at the cost of war. President Roosevelt then wrote — privately — to the Kaiser impressing it upon him that for Germany to make war on France would be a crime against civilization, and he suggested that a Conference of Powers be held to discuss the Moroccan difficulty, and to agree upon terms for a peaceful adjustment. The Kaiser finally accepted Roosevelt's advice, and after a long debate over the preliminaries, the Conference was held at Algeciras, Spain.

That Roosevelt understood, or even suspected, the great German conspiracy which the Kaiser's hirelings were weaving over the United States is wholly improbable. Had he known of any plot he would have been the first to hunt it down and crush it. He knew in general of the extravagant vaporings of the Pan-Germans; but, like most of us, he supposed that there was still enough sanity, not to say common sense, left in Germany to laugh such follies away. Through his intimate friend, Spring-Rice, subsequently the British Ambassador, he had early and sound information of the conditions of Germany. He watched with curiosity the abnormal expansion of the German Fleet. All these things simply confirmed his belief that the United States must attend seri-

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ously to the business of making military and naval preparations.

Secretary Hay had already secured the recognition by the European Powers of the policy of the Open Door in China, the year before Roosevelt became President, but the struggle to maintain that policy had to be kept up for several years. On November 21, 1900, John Hay wrote to Henry Adams: "At least we are spared the infamy of an alliance with Germany. I would rather, I think, be the dupe of China, than chum of the Kaiser. Have you noticed how the world will take anything nowadays from a German? Bülow said yesterday in substance — 'We have demanded of China everything we can think of. If we think of anything else we will demand that, and be d——d to you' — and not a man in the world kicks." [1]

By an adroit move similar to that by which Hay had secured the unwilling adherence of the Powers to his original proposal of the Open Door, he, with Roosevelt's sanction, prevented the German Emperor from carrying out a plan to cut up China and divide the slices among the Europeans.

Equally adroit was Roosevelt's method of dealing with the Czar in 1903. Russian mobs ran amuck and massacred many Jews in the city of Kishineff. The

[1] W. R. Thayer: *John Hay*, II, 248.

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news of this atrocity reached the outside world slowly: when it came, the Jews of western Europe, and especially those of the United States, cried out in horror, held meetings, drew up protests, and framed petitions, asking the Czar to punish the criminals. Leading American Jews besought Roosevelt to plead their cause before the Czar. As it was well known that the Czar would refuse to receive such petitions, and would regard himself as insulted by whatever nation should lay them before him by official diplomatic means, the world wondered what Roosevelt would do. He took one of his short cuts, and chose a way which everybody saw was most obvious and most simple, as soon as he had chosen it. He sent the petitions to our Ambassador at Petrograd, accompanying them with a letter which recited the atrocities and grievances. In this letter, which was handed to the Russian Secretary of State, our Government asked whether His Majesty the Czar would condescend to receive the petitions. Of course the reply was no, but the letter was published in all countries, so that the Czar also knew of the petitions, and of the horrors which called them out. In this fashion the former Ranchman and Rough Rider outwitted, by what I may call his straightforward guile, the crafty diplomats of the Romanoffs.

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CHAPTER XV

ROOSEVELT AND CONGRESS

IN a previous chapter I glanced at three or four of the principal measures in internal policy which Roosevelt took up and fought through, until he finally saw them passed by Congress. No other President, as has been often remarked, kept Congress so busy; and, we may add, none of his predecessors (unless it were Lincoln with the legislation required by the Civil War) put so many new laws on the national statute book. Mr. Charles G. Washburn enumerates these acts credited to Roosevelt's seven and a half years' administration: "The Elkins Anti-Rebate Law applying to railroads; the creation of the Department of Commerce and Labor and the Bureau of Corporations; the law authorizing the building of the Panama Canal; the Hepburn Bill amending and vitalizing the Interstate Commerce Act; the Pure Food and Meat Inspection laws; the law creating the Bureau of Immigration; the Employers' Liability and Safety Appliance Laws, that limited the working hours of employees; the law making the Government liable for injuries to its employees; the law forbidding child labor in the District of Columbia; the reforma-

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tion of the Consular Service; prohibition of campaign contributions from corporations; the Emergency Currency Law, which also provided for the creation of the Monetary Commission." [1]

Although the list is by no means complete, it shows that Roosevelt's receptive and sleepless mind fastened on the full circle of questions which interested American life, so far as that is controlled or directed by national legislation. Some of the laws passed were simply readjustments — new statutes on old matters. Other laws were new, embodying the first attempt to define the attitude which the courts should hold towards new questions which had grown suddenly into great importance. The decade which had favored the springing-up and amazing expansion of the Big Interests, had to be followed by the decade which framed legislation for regulating and curbing these interests. Quite naturally, the monopolists affected did not like to be harnessed or controlled, and, to put it mildly, they resented the interference of the formidable young President whom they could neither frighten, inveigle, nor cajole.

And yet it is as evident to all Americans now, as it was to some Americans at the time, that that legislation had to be passed; because if the monopolists had been allowed to go on unrestrained, they would

[1] C. G. Washburn, 128, 129.

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either have perverted this Republic into an open Plutocracy, in which individual liberty and equality before the law would have disappeared, or they would have hurried on the Social Revolution, the Armageddon of Labor and Capital, the merciless conflict of class with class, which many persons already vaguely dreaded, or thought they saw looming like an ominous cloud on the horizon. It seems astounding that any one should have questioned the necessity of setting up regulations. And will not posterity wonder, when it learns that only in the first decade of the twentieth century did we provide laws against the cruel and killing labor of little children, and against impure foods and drugs?

Year after year, the railroads furnished unending causes for legislative control. There were the old laws which the railroad men tried to evade and which the President, as was his duty, insisted on enforcing; and still more insistent and spectacular were the new problems. Just as three or four hundred years ago the most active and vigorous Frenchmen and Englishmen tried to get possession of large tracts of land, or even of provinces, and became counts and dukes, so the Americans of our generation, who aspired to lead the pushing financier class, worked day and night to own a railroad. Naturally one railroad did not satisfy a man who was bitten by this ambition;

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he reached out for several, or even for a transcontinental system. The war for railroad ownership or monopoly was waged intensely, and in 1901 it nearly plunged the country into a disastrous financial panic. Edward H. Harriman, who had only recently been regarded as a great power in the struggle for railroad supremacy, clashed with James J. Hill, of Minnesota, and J. P. Morgan, a New York banker, over the Northern Pacific Railroad. Their battle was nominally a draw, because Wall Street rushed in and, to avert a nation-wide calamity, demanded a truce. But Harriman remained, until his death in 1909, the railroad czar of the United States, and when he died, he was master of twenty-five thousand miles of road, chief influencer of fifty thousand more miles, besides steamboat companies, banks, and other financial institutions. He controlled more money than any other American. I summarize these statistics, in order to show the reader what sort of a Colossus the President of the United States had to do battle with when he undertook to secure new laws adequate to the control of the enormously expanded railway problems. And he did succeed, in large measure, in bringing the giant corporations to recognize the authority of the Nation. The decision of the Supreme Court in the Northern Securities case, by which the merger of two or more competing roads was declared illegal, put a

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stop to the practice of consolidation, which might have resulted in the ownership of all the railroads in the United States by a single person. Then followed the process of "unscrambling the omelet," to use J. P. Morgan's phrase, in order to bring the companies already illegally merged within the letter of the law. Probably a lynx-eyed investigator might discover that in some of the efforts to legalize operations in the future, "the voice was Jacob's, but the hands were the hands of Esau."

The laws aimed at regulating transportation, rates, and rebates, certainly made for justice, and helped to enlighten great corporations as to their place in the community and their duties towards it. Roosevelt showed that his fearlessness had apparently no bounds, when in 1907 he caused suit to be brought against the Standard Oil Company in Indiana — a branch of a monopoly which was popularly supposed to be above the law — for receiving a rebate from a railroad on the petroleum shipped by the Company. The judge who tried the case gave a verdict in favor of the Government, but another judge, to whom appeal was made, reversed the decision, and finally at a re-trial, a third judge dismissed the indictment. "Thus," says Mr. Ogg, "a good case was lost through judicial blundering." [1]

[1] Ogg, 50.

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But the greatest of Roosevelt's works as a legislator were those which he carried through in the fields of conservation and reclamation. He did not invent these issues; he was only one of many persons who understood their vast importance. He gives full credit to Mr. Gifford Pinchot and Mr. F. H. Newell, who first laid these subjects before him as matters which he as President ought to consider. He had himself during his days in the West seen the need of irrigating the waste tracts. He was a quick and willing learner, and in his first message to Congress (December 1, 1901) he remarked: "The forest and water problems are perhaps the most vital internal problems of the United States." Years later, in referring to this part of his work, he said:

> The idea that our natural resources were inexhaustible still obtained, and there was as yet no real knowledge of their extent and condition. The relation of the conservation of national resources to the problems of national welfare and national efficiency had not yet dawned on the public mind. The reclamation of arid public lands in the West was still a matter for private enterprise alone; and our magnificent river system, with its superb possibilities for public usefulness, was dealt with by the National Government not as a unit, but as a disconnected series of pork-barrel problems, whose only real interest was in their effect on the reëlection or defeat of a Congressman here and there — a theory which, I regret to say, still obtains.[1]

[1] *Autobiography*, p. 430.

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The public lands saved mounted to millions of acres. The long-standing practice of stealing these lands was checked and put a stop to as rapidly as possible. Individuals and private companies had bought for a song great tracts of national property, getting thereby, it might be, the title to mineral deposits worth fabulous sums; and these persons were naturally angry at being deprived of the immense fortunes which they had counted on for themselves. A company would buy up an entire watershed, and control, for its private profit, the water-supply of a region. Roosevelt insisted with indisputable logic that the States and Counties ought themselves to own such natural resources and derive an income from them. So, too, were the areas restored to man's habitation, and to agriculture, by irrigation, and by reforesting. A company, having no object but its own enrichment, would ruthlessly cut down a thousand square miles of timber in order to convert it into wood pulp for paper, or into lumber for building; and the region thus devastated, as if a German army had been over it, would be left without regard to the effect on the climate and the water-supply of the surrounding country. Surely this was wrong.

It seems to me as needless now to argue in behalf of Roosevelt's legislation for the conservation of

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national resources as to argue against cannibalism as a practice fit for civilized men. That lawyers of repute and Congressmen of reputation should have done their utmost, as late as 1906, to obstruct and defeat the passage of the Meat Inspection Bill must seem incredible to persons of average sanity and conscience. If any of those obstructionists still live, they do not boast of their performance, nor is it likely that their children will exult over this part of the paternal record.

In order not to exaggerate Roosevelt's importance in these fundamental reforms, I would repeat that he did not originate the idea of many of them. He gladly took his cue for conservation from Gifford Pinchot, and for reclamation from F. H. Newell, as I have said; the need of inspecting the packing-houses which exported meat, from Senator A. J. Beveridge, and so on. The vital fact is that these projects got form and vigor and publicity, and were pushed through Congress, only after Roosevelt took them up. His opponents, the packers, the land-robbers, the mine-grabbers, the wood-pulp pirates, fought him at every point. They appealed to the old law to discredit and damn the new. They gave him no quarter, and he asked for none because he was bent on securing justice, irrespective of persons or private interests. It followed, of course, that they watched eagerly for

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any slip which might wreck him, and they thought they had found their chance in 1907.

That was a year of financial upheaval, almost of panic, the blame for which the Big Interests tried to fasten on the President. It resulted, they said, from his attack on Capital and the Corporations. A special incident gave plausibility to some of their bitter criticism. Messrs. Gary and Frick, of the United States Steel Corporation, called on the President, and told him that the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company was on the verge of bankruptcy, and that, if it went under, a general panic would probably ensue. To prevent this financial disaster, their Corporation was willing to buy up enough of the Tennessee Company to save it, but they wished to know whether the President would allow the purchase. He told them that he could not officially advise them to take the action proposed, but that he did not regard it as a public duty of his to raise any objection. They made the purchase, and the total amount of their holdings in the Tennessee Company did not equal in value what they had originally held, for the stock had greatly shrunk. The Attorney-General subsequently informed the President that he saw no reason to prosecute the United States Steel Corporation. But the President's enemies did not spare their criticism. They circulated grave suspicions; they hinted

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that, if the whole truth were known, Roosevelt would be embarrassed, to say the least. What had become of his pretended impartiality when he allowed one of the great Trusts to do, with impunity, that which others were prosecuted for? The public, which seldom has the knowledge, or the information, necessary for understanding business or financial complexities, usually remarks, with the archaic sapience of a Greek chorus, "There must be some fire where there is so much smoke." But the public interest was never seriously roused over the Tennessee Coal and Iron affair, and, six years later, when a United States District Court handed down a verdict in which this matter was referred to, the public had almost forgotten what it was all about.

The great result from Roosevelt's battle for conservation, which I believe will glorify him, in the future, to heroic proportions as a statesman, is that where he found wide stretches of desert he left fertile States, that he saved from destruction, that he seized from the hands of the spoilers rivers and valleys which belonged to the people, and that he kept for the people mineral lands of untold value. Nor did he work for material and sanitary prosperity alone; but he worked also for Beauty. He reserved as National Parks for the use and delight of men and

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women forever some of the most beautiful regions in the United States, and the support he gave to these causes urged them forward after he ceased to be President.

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CHAPTER XVI

THE SQUARE DEAL IN ACTION

HAVING seen briefly how President Roosevelt dealt with Capital, let us look even more briefly at his dealings with Labor. I think that he took the deepest personal satisfaction in fighting the criminal rich and the soulless corporations, because he regarded them not only as lawbreakers, malefactors of great wealth, but as despicably mean, in that they used their power to oppress the poor and helpless classes. The Labor groups when they burst out into violence merely responded to the passion which men naturally feel at injustice and at suffering; to their violence they did not add slyness or legal deceits. But Roosevelt had no toleration for the Labor demagogue, for the walking delegate, and all similar parasites, who preyed upon the working classes for their own profit, and fomented the irritation of Labor and Capital.

Stronger, however, than his sympathy for any individual, and especially for those who suffered without redress, was his love of justice. This he put in a phrase which he invented and made current, a

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phrase which everybody could understand: "the labor unions shall have a square deal, and the corporations shall have a square deal." At another time he expressed the same idea, by saying that the rich man should have justice, and that the poor man should have justice, and that no man should have more or less.

Time soon brought a test for his devotion to social justice. In the summer of 1902 the coal-miners of Pennsylvania stopped working. Early in September the public awoke with a start to the realization that a coal famine threatened the country. In the Eastern States, in New York, and Pennsylvania, and in some of the Middle Western States, a calamity threatened, which would be quite as terrible as the invasion of an enemy's army. For not only would lack of fuel cause incalculable hardship and distress from cold, but it would stop transportation, and all manufacturing by machinery run by coal. The mine operators and the miners were at a deadlock. The President invited the leaders on both sides to confer with him at the White House. They came and found him stretched out on an invalid's chair, with one of his legs much bandaged, from an accident he had received in a collision at Pittsfield a few weeks before, but his mental vigor was unsubdued. John Mitchell spoke for the miners. The President urged the quar-

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relers to come to terms. But the big coal operators would not yield. They knew that the distress among the mining population was great, and they believed that if the authorities would only maintain peace, the miners would soon be forced to give in. So the meeting broke up and the "coal barons," as the newspapers dubbed the operators, quitted with evident satisfaction. They felt that they had not only repelled the miners again, but virtually put down the President for interfering in a matter in which he had no legal jurisdiction.

And, in truth, the laws gave the President of the United States no authority to play the rôle of arbiter in a strike. His plain duty was to keep the peace. If a strike resulted in violent disorders he could send United States troops to quell them, but only in case the Governor of the State in which the riots occurred declared himself unable, by the State force at his command, to keep the peace, and requested assistance from the President. In the coal strike the Governor of Pennsylvania, for reasons which I need not discuss here, refused to call for United States troops, and so did the Pennsylvania Legislature. Roosevelt acted as a patriotic citizen might act, but being the President, his interference had immensely greater weight than that of any private citizen could have. He knew the law in the matter, but he believed that

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the popular opinion of the American people would back him up.

In spite of the first rebuff, therefore, he persuaded the miners and the operators to agree to the appointment of an arbitration commission, and this suggested a settlement which both contestants accepted. It ended the great coal strike of 1902, but it left behind it much indignation among the American people, who realized for the first time that one of the three or four great industries essential to the welfare and even to the life itself of the Nation, was in the hands of men who preferred their selfish interests to those of the Nation. It taught several other lessons also; it taught, for instance, that great combinations of Labor may be as dangerous as those of Capital, and as heedless of everything except their own selfish control. It taught that the people of the States and of the Nation could not go on forever without taking steps to put an end to the already dangerous hostility between Capital and Labor, and that that end must be the establishment of justice for all. An apologist of the "coal barons" might have pleaded that they held out not merely for their private gain on that occasion, but in order to defeat the growing menace of Labor. Their stubbornness might turn back the rising flood of socialism.

Respecters of legal precedent, on the other hand,

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criticised the President. They acknowledged his good intentions, but they pointed out that his extra-legal interference set an ominously bad example. And some of them would have preferred to go cold all winter, and even to have had the quarrel sink into civil war, rather than to have had the constitutional ideals of the Nation distorted or obscured by the President's good-natured endeavor. Roosevelt himself, however, never held this opinion. In 1915, he wrote to Mr. Washburn: "I think the settlement of the coal strike was much the most important thing I did about Labor, from every standpoint."

I find an intimate letter of his which dates from the time of the conflict itself and gives frankly his motives and apology, if we should call it that. He admits that his action was not strictly legal, but he asks that, if the President of the United States may not intervene to prevent a widespread calamity, what is his authority worth? If it had been a national strike of iron-workers or miners, he would have held himself aloof, but the coal strike affected a product necessary to the life and health of the people. It was easy enough for well-to-do gentlemen to say that they had rather go cold and see the fight carried through until the strikers submitted, than to have legal precedence ignored; for these gentlemen had money enough to buy fuel at even an exorbitant

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price, and they would be warm anyway, while the great mass of the population froze. I may add that it seems more legal than sensible that any official chosen to preserve the public welfare and health should not be allowed to interpose against persons who would destroy both, and may stir only after the destroyers have caused the catastrophe they aimed at.

Roosevelt's action in the great coal strike not only averted the danger, but it also gave Labor means of judging him fairly. Every demagogue, from the days of Cleon down, has talked glibly in behalf of the downtrodden or unjustly treated working-men, and we might suppose that the demagogue has acquired enlargement of the heart, owing to his overpowering sympathy with Labor. But the questions we have to ask about demagogues are two: Is he sincere? Is he wise?

Sincerity alone has been rather too much exalted as an excuse for the follies and crimes of fanatics and zealots, blatherskites and cranks. Some of our "lunatic fringe" of reformers have been heard to palliate the Huns' atrocities in Belgium, by the plea: "Ah, but they were so perfectly sincere!" Sincerity alone, therefore, is not enough; it must be wise or it may be diabolical. Now Roosevelt was both sincere and wise. He left no doubt in the strikers' minds that he

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sympathized with their sufferings and grievances and with their attempts to better their condition, so far as this could be achieved without violence, and without leaving a permanent state of war between Labor and Capital. In a word, he did not aim at merely patching up a temporary peace, but at finding, and when found, applying, a remedy to the deep-rooted causes of the quarrel.

In his first message to Congress, the new President said: "The most vital problem with which this country, and, for that matter, the whole civilized world, has to deal, is the problem which has for one side the betterment of social conditions, moral and physical, in large cities, and for another side the effort to deal with that tangle of far-reaching questions which we group together when we speak of 'labor.'"

By his settlement of the coal strike, Roosevelt showed the workers that he would practice towards them the justice which he preached, but this did not mean that he would be unjust towards the capitalists. They, too, should have justice, and they had it. He never intended to coddle laborers or to make them feel that, having a grievance, as they alleged, they must be specially favored. Since Labor is, or should be, common to all men, Roosevelt believed that every laborer, whether farmer or mechanic,

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employer or employee, merchant or financier, should stand erect and look every other man straight in the eyes, and neither look up nor down, but with level gaze, fearless, uncringing, uncondescending. The laws he proposed, the adjustments he arranged, had the self-respect, the dignity, of the individual, for their aim. He knew that nothing could be more dangerous to the public, or more harmful to the laboring class itself, than to make of it a privileged class, absolved from the obligations, and even from the laws, which bound the rest of the community. By this ideal he set a great gulf between himself and the demagogues who fawned upon Labor and corrupted it by granting its unjust demands.

He had always present before him a vision of the sacred Oneness of the body politic. This made him the greatest of modern Democrats, and the chief interpreter, as it seems to me, of the highest ideal of American Democracy. The ideal of Oneness can never be realized in a State which permits a single class to enjoy privileges of its own at the expense of all other classes; and it makes no difference whether this class belongs to the Proletariat or to the Plutocracy. Equality before the law, and justice, are the two eternal instruments for establishing the true Democracy. And I do not recall that in any of the measures which Roosevelt supported these two vital

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principles were violated. The following brief quotations from later messages summarize his creed:

> In the vast and complicated mechanism of our modern civilized life, the dominant note is the note of industrialism, and the relations of capital and labor, and especially of organized capital and organized labor, to each other, and to the public at large, come second in importance only to the intimate questions of family life.
>
> The corporation has come to stay, just as the trade union has come to stay. Each can do and has done great good. Each should be favored as long as it does good, but each should be sharply checked where it acts against law and justice.

Any one can profess a creed; Theodore Roosevelt lived his.

Nothing better tested his impartiality than the strike of the Federation of Western Miners in 1907. Many murders and much violence were attributed to this organization and they were charged with assassinating Governor Steunenberg of Idaho. Their leaders, Moyer and Haywood, were anarchists like themselves, and although they professed contempt for law, as soon as they were arrested and brought up for trial, they clutched at every quibble of the law, as drowning men clutch at straws to save them; and, be it said to the glory or shame of the law, it furnished enough quibbles, not only to save them from the gallows, but to let them loose again on society with the legal whitewash "not guilty" stamped upon them.

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Roosevelt understood the great importance of punishing these men, and he committed the indiscretion of classing them with certain big capitalists as "undesirable citizens." Members of the Federation then wrote him denouncing his attempt to prejudice the courts against Moyer and Haywood, and they resented that their leaders should be coupled with Harriman and other big capitalists as "undesirable citizens." This gave the President the opportunity to reply that such criticism did not come appropriately from the Federation; for they and their supporters had got up parades, mass-meetings, and petitions in favor of Moyer and Haywood and for the direct purpose of intimidating the court and jury. "You want," he said in substance, "the square deal for the defendants only. I want the square deal for every one"; and he added, "It is equally a violation of the policy of the square deal for a capitalist to protest against denunciation of a capitalist who is guilty of wrongdoing and for a labor leader to protest against the denunciation of a labor leader who has been guilty of wrongdoing." [1]

But Moyer and Haywood, as I have said, escaped punishment, and before long Haywood reappeared as leader of the Industrial Workers of the World, an anarchistic body with a comically inappropriate

[1] *Autobiography*, 531.

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name for its members objected to nothing so much as to industry and work. The I.W.W., as they have been known for short, have consistently preached violence and "action," by which they might take for themselves the savings and wealth of others as a means to enable them to do no work. And some of the recent strikes which have brought the greatest misery upon the laborers whom they misled, have been directed by I.W.W. leaders.

"I treated anarchists and bomb-throwing and dynamiting gentry precisely as I treated other criminals," Roosevelt writes: "Murder is murder. It is not rendered one whit better by the allegation that it is committed on behalf of a cause." [1] I need hardly state that the President was as consistently vigilant to prevent labor unions from persecuting non-union men as he was in upholding the just rights of the union.

Consider what this record of his with Capital and Labor really means. The social conditions in the United States, owing to the immense expansion in the production of wealth — an expansion which included the invention of innumerable machines and the application, largely made possible by immigration, of millions of laborers — had changed rapidly, and had brought pressingly to the front novel and

[1] *Autobiography*, 532.

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gigantic industrial and financial problems. In the solution of these problems Justice and Equality must not only be regarded, but must play the determining part. Now, Justice and Equality were beautiful abstractions which could be praised by every demagogue without laying upon him any obligation except that of dulcet lip service. Every American, young or old, had heard them lauded so unlimitedly that he did not trouble himself to inquire whether they were facts or not; they were words, sonorous and pleasing words, which made his heart throb, and himself feel a worthier creature. And then came along a young zealot, mighty in physical vigor and moral energy, who believed that Justice and Equality were not mere abstractions, were not mere words for politicians and parsons to thrill their audiences by, but were realities, duties, which every man in a Democracy was bound to revere and to make prevail. And he urged them with such power of persuasion, such tirelessness, such titanic zeal, that he not only converted the masses of the people to believe in them, too, but he also made the legislators of the country understand that they must embody these principles in the national statute book. He did not originate, as I have said, all or most of the reforms, but he gave ear to those who first suggested them, and his enthusiasm and support were essential to their adoption.

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In order to measure the magnitude of Roosevelt's contribution in marking deeply the main principles which should govern the New Age, we need only remember how little his predecessor, President McKinley, a good man with the best intentions, either realized that the New Age was at hand, or thought it necessary even to outline the principles which should guide it; and how little his successor, President Taft, a most amiable man, understood that the New Age, with the Rooseveltian reforms, had come to stay, and could not be swept back by actively opposing it or by allowing the Rooseveltian ideals to lapse.

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CHAPTER XVII

ROOSEVELT AT HOME

ALTHOUGH Theodore Roosevelt was personally known to more people of the United States than any other President has been, and his manners and quick responsive cordiality made multitudes feel, after a brief sight of him, or after shaking his hand, that they were old acquaintances, he maintained during his life a dignified reticence regarding his home and family. But now that he is dead and the world craves eagerly, but not irreverently, to know as much as it can about his many sides, I feel that it is not improper to say something about that intimate side which was in some respects the most characteristic of all.

Early in the eighties he bought a country place at Oyster Bay, Long Island, and on the top of a hill he built a spacious house. There was a legend that in old times Indian Chiefs used to gather there to hold their powwows; at any rate, the name, the Sagamores' Hill, survived them, and this shortened to Sagamore Hill he gave to his home. That part of Long Island on the north coast overlooking the Sound is very attractive; it is a country of hills and

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hollows, with groves of tall trees, and open fields for farming, and lawns near the house. You look down on Oyster Bay which seems to be a small lake shut in by the curving shore at the farther end. From the house you see the Sound and the hills of Connecticut along the horizon.

After the death of his first wife in January, 1884, Roosevelt went West to the Bad Lands of North Dakota where he lived two years at Medora, on a ranch which he owned, and there he endured the hardships and excitements of ranch life at that time; acting as cow-puncher, ranchman, deputy sheriff, or hunting big and little game, or writing books and articles. In the autumn of 1886, however, having been urged to run as candidate for Mayor of New York City, he came East again. He made a vigorous campaign, but having two opponents against him he was beaten. Then he took a trip to Europe where he married Miss Edith Kermit Carow, whom he had known in New York since childhood, and on their return to this country, they settled at Sagamore Hill. Two years later, when President Harrison appointed Roosevelt a Civil Service Commissioner, they moved to Washington. There they lived in a rather small house at 1720 Jefferson Place — "modest," one might call it, in comparison with the modern palaces which had begun to spring up in the National Cap-

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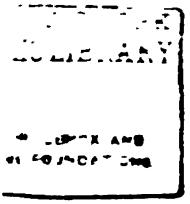

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ital; but people go to a house for the sake of its occupants and not for its size and upholstery.

So for almost six years pretty nearly everybody worth knowing crossed the Roosevelts' threshold, and they themselves quickly took their place in Washington society. Roosevelt's humor, his charm, his intensity, his approachableness, attracted even those who rejected his politics and his party. Bright sayings cannot be stifled, and his added to the gayety of more than one group. He was too discreet to give utterance to them all, but his private letters at that time, and always, glistened with his remarks on public characters. He said, for instance, of Senator X, whom he knew in Washington: He "looks like Judas, but unlike that gentleman, he has no capacity for remorse."

When the Roosevelts returned to New York, where he became Police Commissioner in 1895, they made their home again at Oyster Bay. This was thirty miles by rail from the city, near enough to be easily accessible, but far enough away to deter the visits of random, curious, undesired callers. Later, when automobiles came in, Roosevelt motored to and from town. Mrs. Roosevelt looked after the place itself; she supervised the farming, and the flower gardens were her especial care. The children were now growing up, and from the time when they could toddle

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they took their place — a very large place — in the life of the home. Roosevelt described the intense satisfaction he had in teaching the boys what his father had taught him. As soon as they were large enough, they rode their horses, they sailed on the Cove and out into the Sound. They played boys' games, and through him they learned very young to observe nature. In his college days he had intended to be a naturalist, and natural history remained his strongest avocation. And so he taught his children to know the birds and animals, the trees, plants, and flowers of Oyster Bay and its neighborhood. They had their pets — Kermit, one of the boys, carried a pet rat in his pocket.

Three things Roosevelt required of them all; obedience, manliness, and truthfulness. And I imagine that all these virtues were taught by affection and example, rather than by constant correction. For the family was wholly united, they did everything together; the children had no better fun than to accompany their father and mother, and there were a dozen or more young cousins and neighbors who went out with them too, forming a large, delighted family for whom "Uncle" or "Cousin Theodore" was leader and idol. And just as formerly, in the long winter nights on his ranch at Medora, he used to read aloud to the cowboys and hunters of

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what was then the Western Wilderness, so at Sagamore Hill, in the days of their childhood, he read or told stories to the circle of boys and girls.

In 1901, Mr. Roosevelt became President, and for seven years and a half his official residence was the White House, where he was obliged to spend most of the year. But whenever he could steal away for a few days he sought rest and recreation at Oyster Bay, and there, during the summers, his family lived. So far as the changed conditions permitted, he did not allow his official duties to interfere with his family life. "One of the most wearing things about being President," a President once said to me, "is the incessant publicity of it. For four years you have not a moment to yourself, not a moment of privacy." And yet Roosevelt, masterful in so many other things, was masterful in this also. Nothing interfered with the seclusion of the family breakfast. There were no guests, only Mrs. Roosevelt and the children, and the simplest of food. At Oyster Bay he would often chop trees in the early morning, and sometimes, while he was President, he would ride before breakfast, but the meal itself was quiet, private, uninterrupted. Then each member of the family would go about his or her work, for idleness had no place with them. The President spent his morning in attending to his correspondence and dictating

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letters, then in receiving persons by appointment, and he always reserved time when any American, rich or poor, young or old, could speak to him freely. He liked to see them all and many were the odd experiences which he had. He asked one old lady what he could do for her. She replied: "Nothing; I came all the way from Jacksonville, Florida, just to see what a live President looked like. I never saw one before." "That's very kind of you," the President replied; "persons from up here go all the way to Florida just to see a live alligator" — and so he put the visitor at her ease.

Luncheon was a varied meal; sometimes there were only two or three guests at it; at other times there might be a dozen. It afforded the President an opportunity for talking informally with visitors whom he wished to see, and not infrequently it brought together round the table a strange, not to say a motley, company.

After luncheon followed more work in his office for the President, looking over the letters he had dictated and signing them, signing documents and holding interviews. Later in the afternoon he always reserved two hours for a walk or drive with Mrs. Roosevelt. Nothing interfered with that. In the season he played tennis with some of the large group of companions whom he gathered round him, officials

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high and low, foreign Ambassadors and Cabinet Ministers and younger under-secretaries who were popularly known as the "Tennis Cabinet." There were fifty or more of them, and that so many should have kept their athletic vigor into middle age, and even beyond it, spoke well for the physique of the men of official Washington at that time.

At Oyster Bay Roosevelt had instituted "hiking." He and the young people and such of the neighbors as chose would start from Sagamore Hill and walk in a bee-line to a point four or five miles off. The rule was that no natural impediment should cause them to digress or to stop. So they went through the fields and over the fences, across ditches and pools, and even clambered up and down a haystack, if one happened to be in the way, or through a barnyard. Of course they often reached home spattered with mud or even drenched to the skin from a plunge into the water, but with much fun, a livelier circulation, and a hearty appetite to their credit.

In Washington the President continued this practice of hiking, but in a somewhat modified form. His favorite resort was Rock Creek, then a wild stream, with a good deal of water in it, and here and there steep, rocky banks. To be invited by the President to go on one of those hikes was regarded as a mark of special favor. He indulged in them to test a man's

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bodily vigor and endurance, and there were many amusing incidents and perhaps more amusing stories about them. M. Tardieu, who at that time was paying a short visit to this country and was connected with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told me that the dispatches which the new French Ambassador, M. Jusserand, sent to Paris were full of reports on President Roosevelt's personality. The Europeans had no definite conception of him at that time, and so the sympathetic and much-esteemed Ambassador, who still represents France at Washington, tried to give his Government information by which it could judge for itself what sort of a person the President was. What must have been the surprise in the French Foreign Office when it received the following dispatch: (I give the substance, of course, because I have not seen the original.)

'Yesterday,' wrote Ambassador Jusserand, 'President Roosevelt invited me to take a promenade with him this afternoon at three. I arrived at the White House punctually, in afternoon dress and silk hat, as if we were to stroll in the Tuileries Garden or in the Champs Elysées. To my surprise, the President soon joined me in a tramping suit, with knickerbockers and thick boots, and soft felt hat, much worn. Two or three other gentlemen came, and we started off at what seemed to me a breakneck pace, which soon brought us out of the city. On reaching the country, the President went pell-mell over the fields, following neither road nor path, always on, on, straight ahead! I was much winded, but I would not

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give in, nor ask him to slow up, because I had the honor of *La belle France* in my heart. At last we came to the bank of a stream, rather wide and too deep to be forded. I sighed relief, because I thought that now we had reached our goal and would rest a moment and catch our breath, before turning homeward. But judge of my horror when I saw the President unbutton his clothes and heard him say, "We had better strip, so as not to wet our things in the Creek." Then I, too, for the honor of France, removed my apparel, everything except my lavender kid gloves. The President cast an inquiring look at these as if they, too, must come off, but I quickly forestalled any remark by saying, "With your permission, Mr. President, I will keep these on, otherwise it would be embarrassing if we should meet ladies." And so we jumped into the water and swam across.'

M. Jusserand has a fine sense of humor and doubtless he has laughed often over this episode, although he must have been astonished and irritated when it occurred. But it gave Roosevelt exactly what he wanted by showing him that the plucky little Frenchman was "game" for anything, and they remained firm friends for life.

Occasionally, one of the guests invited on a hike reluctated from taking the plunge, and then he was allowed to go up stream or down and find a crossing at a bridge; but I suspect that his host and the habitual hikers instinctively felt a little less regard for him after that. General Leonard Wood was one of Roosevelt's boon companions on these excursions, and, speaking of him, I am reminded of one of the

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President's orders which caused a great flurry among Army officers in Washington.

The President learned that many of these officers had become soft, physically, through their long residence in the city, where an unmilitary life did not tend to keep their muscles hard. As a consequence these great men of war became easy-going, indolent even, better suited to loaf in the armchairs of the Metropolitan Club and discuss campaigns and battles long ago than to lead troops in the field. "Their condition," said Roosevelt, "would have excited laughter, had it not been so serious, to think that they belonged to the military arm of the Government. A cavalry colonel proved unable to keep his horse at a sharp trot for even half a mile when I visited his post; a major-general proved afraid even to let his horse canter when he went on a ride with us; and certain otherwise good men proved as unable to walk as if they had been sedentary brokers." After consulting Generals Wood and Bell, who were themselves real soldiers at the top of condition, the President issued orders that the infantry should march fifty miles, and the cavalry one hundred, in three days. There was an outcry. The newspapers denounced Roosevelt as a tyrant who followed his mere caprices. Some of the officers intrigued with Congressmen to nullify the order. But when the

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President himself, accompanied by Surgeon-General Rixey and two officers, rode more than one hundred miles in a single day over the frozen and rutty Virginia roads, the objectors could not keep up open opposition. Roosevelt adds, ironically, that three naval officers who walked the fifty miles in a day, were censured for not obeying instructions, and were compelled to do the test over again in three days.

Dinner in the White House was usually a formal affair, to which most, if not all the guests, at least, were invited some time in advance. There were, of course, the official dinners to the foreign diplomats, to the justices of the Supreme Court, to the members of the Cabinet; ordinarily, they might be described as general. The President never forgot those who had been his friends at any period of his life. It might happen that Bill Sewall, his earliest guide from Maine, or a Dakota ranchman, or a New York policeman, or one of his trusted enthusiasts in a hard-fought political campaign, turned up at the White House. He was sure to be asked to luncheon or to dinner, by the President. And these former chums must have felt somewhat embarrassed, if they were capable of feeling embarrassment, when they found themselves seated beside some of the great ladies of Washington. Perhaps Roosevelt himself felt a little trepidation as to how the unmixables would mix. He

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is reported to have said to one Western cowboy of whom he was fond: "Now, Jimmy, don't bring your gun along to-night. The British Ambassador is going to dine too, and it would n't do for you to pepper the floor round his feet with bullets, in order to see a tenderfoot dance."

But those dinners were mainly memorable occasions, and the guests who attended them heard some of the best talk in America at that time, and came away with increased wonder for the variety of knowledge and interest, and for the unceasing charm and courtesy of their host, the President. Contrary to the opinion of persons who heard him only as a political speaker shouting in the open air from the back platform of his train or in a public square, Roosevelt was not only a speaker, he was also a most courteous listener. I watched him at little dinners listen not only patiently, but with an astonishing simulation of interest, to very dull persons who usurped the conversation and imagined that they were winning his admiration. Mr. John Morley, who was a guest at the White House at election time in 1904, said: "The two things in America which seem to me most extraordinary are Niagara Falls and President Roosevelt."

Jacob Riis, the most devoted personal follower of Roosevelt, gives this as the finest compliment he ever

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heard of him. A lady said that she had always been looking for some living embodiment of the high ideals she had as to what a hero ought to be. "I always wanted to make Roosevelt out that," she declared, "but somehow every time he did something that seemed really great it turned out, upon looking at it closely, that it was *only just the right thing to do*."[1]

But at home Roosevelt had affection, not compliments, whether these were unintentional and sincere, like that of the lady just quoted, or were thinly disguised flattery. And affection was what he most craved from his family and nearest friends, and what he gave to them without stint. As I have said, he allowed nothing to interrupt the hours set apart for his wife and children while he was at the White House; and at Oyster Bay there was always time for them. A typical story is told of the boys coming in upon him during a conference with some important visitor, and saying reproachfully, "It 's long after four o'clock, and you promised to go with us at four." "So I did," said Roosevelt. And he quickly finished his business with the visitor and went. When the children were young, he usually saw them at supper and into bed, and he talked of the famous pillow fights they had with him. House guests at the White House sometimes unexpectedly caught sight of him crawling in

[1] Riis, 268–69.

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the entry near the children's rooms, with two or three children riding on his back. Roosevelt's days were seldom less than fifteen hours long, and we can guess how he regarded the laboring men of today who clamor for eight and six, and even fewer hours, as the normal period for a day's work. He got up at half-past seven and always finished breakfast by nine, when what many might call the real work of his day began.

The unimaginative laborer probably supposes that most of the duties which fall to an industrious President are not strictly work at all; but if any one had to meet for an hour and a half every forenoon such Congressmen and Senators as chose to call on him, he would understand that that was a job involving real work, hard work. They came every day with a grievance, or an appeal, or a suggestion, or a favor to ask, and he had to treat each one, not only politely, but more or less deferently. Early in his Administration I heard it said that he offended some Congressmen by denying their requests in so loud a voice that others in the room could hear him, and this seemed to some a humiliation. President McKinley, on the other hand, they said, lowered his voice, and spoke so softly and sweetly that even his refusal did not jar on his visitor, and was not heard at all by the bystanders. If this happened, I suspect it was because

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Roosevelt spoke rather explosively and had a habit of emphasis, and not because he wished in any way to send his petitioner's rebuff through the room.

Nor was the hour which followed this, when he received general callers, less wearing. As these persons came from all parts of the Union, so they were of all sorts and temperaments. Here was a worthy citizen from Colorado who, on the strength of having once heard the President make a public speech in Denver, claimed immediate friendship with him. Then might come an old lady from Georgia, who remembered his mother's people there, or the lady from Jacksonville, Florida, of whom I have already spoken. Once a little boy, who was almost lost in the crush of grown-up visitors, managed to reach the President. "What can I do for you?" the President asked; and the boy told how his father had died leaving his mother with a large family and no money, and how he was selling typewriters to help support her. His mother, he said, would be most grateful if the President would accept a typewriter from her as a gift. So the President told the little fellow to go and sit down until the other visitors had passed, and then he would attend to him. No doubt, the boy left the White House well contented — and richer.

Roosevelt's official day ended at half-past nine or

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ten in the evening, and then, after the family had gone to bed, he sat down to read or write, and it was long after midnight, sometimes one o'clock, sometimes much later, before he turned in himself.

He regarded the preservation of health as a duty; and well he might so regard it, because in childhood he had been a sickly boy, with apparently only a life of invalidism to look forward to. But by sheer will, and by going through physical exercises with indomitable perseverance, he had built up his body until he was strong enough to engage in all sports and in the hardships of Western life and hunting. After he became President, he allowed nothing to interfere with his physical exercise. I have spoken of his long hikes and of his vigorous games with members of the Tennis Cabinet. On many afternoons he would ride for two hours or more with Mrs. Roosevelt or some friend, and it is a sad commentary on the perpetual publicity to which the American people condemn their Presidents, that he sometimes was obliged to ride off into the country with one of his Cabinet Ministers in order to be able to discuss public matters in private with him. Roosevelt took care to provide means for exercise indoors in very stormy weather. He had a professional boxer and wrestler come to him, and when jiu-jitsu, the Japanese system of physical training, was in vogue, he learned some of

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its introductory mysteries from one of its foremost professors.

It was in a boxing bout at the White House with his teacher that he lost the sight of an eye from a blow which injured his eyeball. But he kept this loss secret for many years. He had a wide acquaintance among professional boxers and even prize-fighters. Jeffries, who had been a blacksmith before he entered the ring, hammered a penholder out of a horseshoe and gave it to the President, a gift which Roosevelt greatly prized and showed among his trophies at Oyster Bay. John L. Sullivan, perhaps the most notorious of the champion prize-fighters of America, held Roosevelt in such great esteem that when he died his family invited the ex-President to be one of the pall-bearers. But Mr. Roosevelt was then too sick himself to be able to travel to Boston and serve.

At Oyster Bay in summer, the President found plenty of exercise on the place. It contained some eighty acres, part of which was woodland, and there were always trees to be chopped. Hay-making, also, was an equally severe test of bodily strength, and to pitch hay brought every muscle into use. There, too, he had water sports, but he always preferred rowing to sailing, which was too slow and inactive an exercise for him. In old times, rowing used to be the penalty to which galley-slaves were condemned, but now it is

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commended by athletes as the best of all forms of exercise for developing the body and for furnishing stimulating competition.

No President ever lived on better terms with the newspaper men than Roosevelt did. He treated them all with perfect fairness, according no special favors, no "beats," or "scoops" to any one. So they regarded him as "square"; and further they knew that he was a man of his word, not to be trifled with. "It is generally supposed," Roosevelt remarked, "that newspaper men have no sense of honor, but that is not true. If you treat them fairly, they will treat you fairly; and they will keep a secret if you impress upon them that it must be kept."

The great paradox of Roosevelt's character was the contrast between its fundamental simplicity and its apparent spectacular quality. His acts seemed to be unusual, striking, and some uncharitable critics thought that he aimed at effect; in truth, however, he acted at the moment as the impulse or propriety of the moment suggested. There was no premeditation, no swagger. Dwellers in Berlin noticed that after William the Crown Prince became the Kaiser William II, he thrust out his chest and adopted a rather pompous walk, but there was nothing like this in Roosevelt's manner or carriage. In his public speaking, he gesticulated incessantly, and in the

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difficulty he had in pouring out his words as rapidly as the thoughts came to him, he seemed sometimes almost to grimace; but this was natural, not studied. And so I can easily understand what some one tells me who saw him almost daily as President in the White House. "Roosevelt," he said, "had an immense reverence for the Presidential office. He did not feel cocky or conceited at being himself President; he felt rather the responsibility for dignity which the office carried with it, and he was humble. You must be as intimate with him as possible, but there was a certain line which no one ever crossed. That was the line which the office itself drew."

Roosevelt had that reverence for the great men of the past which should stir every heart with a capacity for noble things. In the White House he never forgot the Presidents who had dwelt there before him. "I like to see in my mind's eye," he said to Mr. Rhodes, the American historian, "the gaunt form of Lincoln stalking through these halls." During a visit at the White House, Mr. Rhodes watched the President at work throughout an entire day and set down the points which chiefly struck him. Foremost among these was the lack of leisure which we allow our Presidents. They have work to do which is more important than that of a railroad manager, or the president of the largest business corporation, or

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of the leader of the American Bar. They are expected to know the pros and cons of each bill brought before them to sign so that they can sign it not only intelligently but justly, and yet thanks to the constant intrusion which Americans deem it their right to force on the President, he has no time for deliberation, and, as I have said, Mr. Roosevelt was often obliged, when he wished to have an undisturbed consultation with one of his Cabinet Secretaries, to take him off on a long ride.

"I chanced to be in the President's room," Mr. Rhodes continues, "when he dictated the rough draft of his famous dispatch to General Chaffee respecting torture in the Philippines. While he was dictating, two or three cards were brought in, also some books with a request for the President's autograph, and there were some other interruptions. While the dispatch as it went out in its revised form could not be improved, a President cannot expect to be always so happy in dictating dispatches in the midst of distractions. Office work of far-reaching importance should be done in the closet. Certainly no monarch or minister in Europe does administrative work under such unfavorable conditions; indeed, this public which exacts so much of the President's time should in all fairness be considerate in its criticism." [1]

[1] Rhodes: *Historical Essays*, 238–39.

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To cope in some measure with the vast amount of business thrust upon him, Roosevelt had unique endowments. Other Presidents had been indolent and let affairs drift; he cleared his desk every day. Other Presidents felt that they had done their duty if they merely dispatched the important business which came to them; Roosevelt was always initiating, either new legislation or new methods in matters which did not concern the Government. One autumn, when there was unusual excitement, with recriminations in disputes in the college football world, I was surprised to receive a large four-page typewritten letter, giving his views as to what ought to be done. He reorganized the service in the White House, and not only that, he had the Executive Mansion itself remodeled somewhat according to the original plans so as to furnish adequate space for the crowds who thronged the official receptions, and, at the other end of the building, proper quarters for the stenographers, typewriters, and telegraphers required to file and dispatch his correspondence. Promptness was his watchword, and in cases where it was expected, I never knew twenty-four hours to elapse before he dictated his reply to a letter.

The orderliness which he introduced into the White House should also be recorded. When I first went there in 1882 with a party of Philadelphia

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junketers who had an appointment to shake hands with President Arthur, as a preliminary to securing a fat appropriation to the River and Harbor Bill of that year, the White House was treated by the public very much as a common resort. The country owned it: therefore, why should n't any American make himself at home in it? I remember that on one of the staircases, Dr. Mary Walker (recently dead), dressed in what she was pleased to regard as a masculine costume, was haranguing a group of five or six strangers, and here and there in the corridors we met other random visitors. Mr. Roosevelt established a strict but simple regimen. No one got past the Civil War veteran who acted as doorkeeper without proper credentials; and it was impossible to reach the President himself without first encountering his Secretary, Mr. Loeb.

To the President some persons were, of course, privileged. If an old pal from the West, or a Rough Rider came, the President did not look at the clock, or speed him away. The story goes that one morning Senator Cullom came on a matter of business and indeed rather in a hurry. On asking who was "in there," and being told that a Rough Rider had been with the President for a half-hour, the Senator said, "Then there's no hope for me," took his hat, and departed.

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Although, as I have said, Roosevelt might be as intimate and cordial as possible with any visitor, he never forgot the dignity which belonged to his office. Nor did he forget that as President he was socially as well as officially the first person in the Republic.

In speaking of these social affairs, I must not pass over without mention the unfailing help which his two sisters gave him at all times. The elder, the wife of Admiral William S. Cowles, lived in Washington when Roosevelt was Civil Service Commissioner, and her house was always in readiness for his use. His younger sister, Mrs. Douglas Robinson, lived in New York City, and first at No. 422 Madison Avenue and later at No. 9 East Sixty-third Street, she dispensed hospitality for him and his friends. Nothing could have been more convenient. If he were at Oyster Bay, it was often impossible to make an appointment to meet there persons whom he wished to see, but he had merely to telephone to Mrs. Robinson, the appointment was made, and the interview was held. It was at her house that many of the breakfasts with Senator Platt — those meetings which caused so much alarm and suspicion among over-righteous reformers — took place while Roosevelt was Governor. Mr. Odell nearly always accompanied the Senator, as if he felt afraid to trust the astute Boss with the very persuasive young Gover-

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nor. Having Mrs. Robinson's house as a shelter, Theodore could screen himself from the newspaper men. There he could hold private consultations which, if they had been referred to in the papers, would have caused wild guesses, surmises, and embarrassing remarks. His sisters always rejoiced that, with his wonderful generosity of nature, he took them often into his political confidence, and listened with unfeigned respect to their point of view on subjects on which they might even have a slight difference of opinion.

Mr. Charles G. Washburn tells the following story to illustrate Roosevelt's faculty of getting to the heart of every one whom he knew. When he was hunting in Colorado, "he met a cowboy who had been with him with the Rough Riders in Cuba. The man came up to speak to Roosevelt, and said, 'Mr. President, I have been in jail a year for killing a gentleman.' 'How did you do it?' asked the President, meaning to inquire as to the circumstances. 'Thirty-eight on a forty-five frame,' replied the man, thinking that the only interest the President had was that of a comrade who wanted to know with what kind of a tool the trick was done. Now, I will venture to say that to no other President, from Washington down to and including Wilson, would the man-killer have made that response." [1]

[1] Washburn, 202–03.

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I think that all of us will agree with Mr. Washburn, who adds another story of the same purport, and told by Roosevelt himself.

Another old comrade wrote him from jail in Arizona: "Dear Colonel: I am in trouble. I shot a lady in the eye, but I did not intend to hit the lady; I was shooting at my wife." Roosevelt had large charity for sinners of this type, but he would not tolerate deceit or lying. Thus, when a Congressman made charges to him against one of the Wild Western appointees whom he accused of drinking and of gambling, the President remarked that he had to take into consideration the moral standards of the section, where a man who gambled or who drank was not necessarily an evil person. Then the Congressman pressed his charges and said that the fellow had been in prison for a crime a good many years before. This roused Roosevelt, who said, "He never told me about that," and he immediately telegraphed the accused for an explanation. The man replied that the charge was true, whereupon the President at once dismissed him, not for gambling or for drinking, but for trying to hide the fact that he had once been in jail.

In these days of upheaval, when the most ancient institutions and laws are put in question, and anarchists and Bolshevists, blind like Samson, wish

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to throw down the very pillars on which Civilization rests, the Family, the fundamental element of civilized life, is also violently attacked. All the more precious, therefore, will Theodore Roosevelt's example be, as an upholder of the Family. He showed how essential it is for the development of the individual and as a pattern for Society. Only through the Family can come the deepest joys of life and can the most intimate duties be transmuted into joys. As son, as husband, as father, as brother, he fulfilled the ideals of each of those relations, and, so strong was his family affection, that, while still a comparatively young man, he drew to him as a patriarch might, not only his own children, but his kindred in many degrees. With utter truth he wrote, "I have had the happiest home life of any man I have ever known." And that, as we who were his friends understood, was to him the highest and dearest prize which life could bestow.

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CHAPTER XVIII

HITS AND MISSES

IN this sketch I do not attempt to follow chronological order, except in so far as this is necessary to make clear the connection between lines of policy, or to define the structural growth of character. But in Roosevelt's life, as in the lives of all of us, many events, sometimes important events, occurred and had much notice at the moment and then faded away and left no lasting mark. Let us take up a few of these which reveal the President from different angles.

Since the close of the Civil War the Negro Question had brooded over the South. The war emancipated the Southern negroes and then politics came to embitter the question. Partly to gain a political advantage, partly as some visionaries believed, to do justice, and partly to punish the Southerners, the Northern Republicans gave the Southern negroes equal political rights with the whites. They even handed over the government of some of the States to wholly incompetent blacks. In self-defense the whites terrorized the blacks through such secret organizations as the Ku-Klux Klan, and recovered their ascendancy in governing. Later, by such spe-

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cious devices as the Grandfathers' Law, they prevented most of the blacks from voting, and relieved themselves of the trouble of maintaining a system of intimidation. The real difficulty being social and racial, to mix politics with it was to envenom it.

Roosevelt took a man for what he was without regard to race, creed, or color. He held that a negro of good manners and education ought to be treated as a white man would be treated. He felt keenly the sting of ostracism and he believed that if the Southern whites would think as he did on this matter, they might the quicker solve the Negro Question and establish human if not friendly relations with the blacks.

The negro race at that time had a fine spokesman in Booker T. Washington, a man who had been born a slave, was educated at the Hampton Institute, served as teacher there, and then founded the Tuskeegee Institute for teaching negroes. He wisely saw that the first thing to be done was to teach them trades and farming, by which they could earn a living and make themselves useful if not indispensable to the communities in which they settled. He did not propose to start off to lift his race by letting them imagine that they could blossom into black Shakespeares and dusky Raphaels in a single generation. He himself was a man of tact, prudence, and sagacity

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with trained intelligence and a natural gift of speaking.

To him President Roosevelt turned for some suggestions as to appointing colored persons to offices in the South. It happened that on the day appointed for a meeting Washington reached the White House shortly before luncheon time, and that, as they had not finished their conference, Roosevelt asked him to stay to luncheon. Washington hesitated politely. Roosevelt insisted. They lunched, finished their business, and Washington went away. When this perfectly insignificant fact was published in the papers the next morning, the South burst into a storm of indignation and abuse. Some of the Southern journals saw, in what was a mere routine incident, a terrible portent, foreboding that Roosevelt planned to put the negroes back to control the Southern whites. Others alleged the milder motive that he was fishing for negro votes. The common type of fire-eaters saw in it one of Roosevelt's unpleasant ways of having fun by insulting the South. And Southern cartoonists took an ignoble, feeble retaliation by caricaturing even Mrs. Roosevelt.

The President did not reply publicly. As his invitation to Booker Washington was wholly unpremeditated, he was surprised by the rage which it caused among Southerners. But he was clear-sighted enough

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to understand that, without intending it, he had made a mistake, and this he never repeated. Nothing is more elusive than racial antipathy, and we need not wonder that a man like Roosevelt who, although he was most solicitous not to hurt persons' feelings and usually acted, unless he had proof to the contrary, on the assumption that everybody was blessed with a modicum of good-will and common sense, should not always be able to foresee the strange inconsistencies into which the antipathy of the white Southerners for the blacks might lead. A little while later there was a religious gathering in Washington of Protestant-Episcopal ministers. They had a reception at the White House. Their own managers made out a list of ministers to be invited, and among the guests were a negro archdeacon and his wife, and the negro rector of a Maryland parish. Although these persons attended the reception, the Southern whites burst into no frenzy of indignation against the President. Who could steer safely amid such shoals?[1] The truth is that no President since Lincoln had a kindlier feeling towards the South than Roosevelt had. He often referred proudly to the fact that his mother came from Georgia, and that his two Bulloch uncles fought in the Confederate Navy. He wished to bring back complete friendship between the sections. But

[1] Leupp, 231.

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he understood the difficulties, as his explanation to Mr. James Ford Rhodes, the historian, in 1905, amply proved. He agreed fully as to the folly of the Congressional scheme of reconstruction based on universal negro suffrage, but he begged Mr. Rhodes not to forget that the initial folly lay with the Southerners themselves. The latter said, quite properly, that he did not wonder that much bitterness still remained in the breasts of the Southern people about the carpet-bag negro régime. So it was not to be wondered at that in the late sixties much bitterness should have remained in the hearts of the Northerners over the remembrance of the senseless folly and wickedness of the Southerners in the early sixties. Roosevelt felt that those persons who most heartily agreed that as it was the presence of the negro which made the problem, and that slavery was merely the worst possible method of solving it, we must therefore hold up to reprobation, as guilty of doing one of the worst deeds which history records, those men who tried to break up this Union because they were not allowed to bring slavery and the negro into our new territory. Every step which followed, from freeing the slave to enfranchising him, was due only to the North being slowly and reluctantly forced to act by the South's persistence in its folly and wickedness.

The President could not say these things in pub-

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lic because they tended, when coming from a man in public place, to embitter people. But Rhodes was writing what Roosevelt hoped would prove the great permanent history of the period, and he said that it would be a misfortune for the country, and especially a misfortune for the South, if they were allowed to confuse right and wrong in perspective.

He added that his difficulties with the Southern people had come not from the North, but from the South. He had never done anything that was not for their interest. At present, he added, they were, as a whole, speaking well of him. When they would begin again to speak ill, he did not know, but in either case his duty was equally clear.[1]

Inviting Booker Washington to the White House was a counsel of perfection which we must consider one of Roosevelt's misses. Quite different was the voyage of the Great Fleet, planned by him and carried out without hitch or delay.

We have seen that from his interest in American naval history, which began before he left Harvard, he came to take a very deep interest in the Navy itself, and when he was Assistant Secretary, he worked night and day to complete its preparation for entering the Spanish War. From the time he became President, he urged upon Congress and the country the

[1] February 20, 1905.

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need of maintaining a fleet adequate to ward off any dangers to which we might be exposed. In season and out of season he preached, with the ardor of a propagandist, his gospel that the Navy is the surest guarantor of peace which this country possesses. By dint of urging he persuaded Congress to consent to lay down one battleship of the newest type a year. Congress was not so much reluctant as indifferent. Even the lesson of the Spanish War failed to teach the Nation's law-makers, or the Nation itself, that we must have a Navy to protect us if we intended to play the rôle of a World Power. The American people instinctively dreaded militarism, and so they resisted consenting to naval or military preparations which might expand into a great evil such as they saw controlling the nations of Europe.

Nevertheless Roosevelt, as usual, could not be deterred by opposition; and when the Hague Conference in 1907, through the veto of Germany, refused to limit armaments by sea and land, he warned Congress that one new battleship a year would not do, that they must build four. Meanwhile, he had pushed to completion a really formidable American Fleet, which assembled in Hampton Roads on December 1, 1907, and ten days later weighed anchor for parts unknown. There were sixteen battleships, commanded by Rear Admiral Robley D. Evans. Every ship was

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new, having been built since the Spanish War. The President and Mrs. Roosevelt and many notables reviewed the Fleet from the President's yacht *Mayflower*, as it passed out to sea. Later, the country learned that the Fleet was to sail round Cape Horn, to New Zealand and Australia, up the Pacific to San Francisco, then across to Japan, and so steer homeward through the Indian Ocean, the Suez Canal, and the Mediterranean to Gibraltar, across the Atlantic, and back to Hampton Roads.

The American public did not quite know what to make of this dramatic gesture. Roosevelt's critics said, of course, that it was the first overt display of his combativeness, and that from this he would go on to create a great army and be ready, at the slightest provocation, to attack any foreign Power. In fact, however, the sending of the Great Fleet, which was wholly his project, was designed by him to strengthen the prospect of peace for the United States. Through it, he gave a concrete illustration of his maxim: "Speak softly, but carry a big stick." The Panama Canal was then half dug and would be finished in a few years. Distant nations thought of this country as of a land peopled by dollar-chasers, too absorbed in getting rich to think of providing defense for themselves. The fame of Dewey's exploit at Manila Bay had ceased to strike wonder among foreign peoples,

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after they heard how small and almost contemptible, judging by the new standards, the Squadron was by which he won his victory. Japan, the rising young giant of the Orient, felt already strong enough to resent any supposed insult from the United States. Germany had embarked on her wild naval policy of creating a fleet which would soon be able to cope with that of England.

When, however, the Great Fleet steamed into Yokohama or Bombay or any other port, it furnished a visible evidence of the power of the country from which it came. We could not send an army to furnish the same object-lesson. But the Fleet must have opened the eyes of any foreign Jingoes who supposed that they might send over with impunity their battleships and attack our ports. In this way it served directly to discourage war against us, and accordingly it was a powerful agent for peace. Spectacular the voyage was without question, like so many of Roosevelt's acts, but if you analyze it soberly, do you not admit that it was the one obvious, simple way by which to impress upon an uncertain and rapacious world the fact that the United States had man-power as well as money-power, and that they were prepared to repel all enemies?

On February 22, 1909, the White Fleet steamed back to Hampton Roads and was received by Presi-

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dent Roosevelt. It had performed a great moral achievement. It had also raised the efficiency of its officers and the discipline of its crews to the highest point. There had been no accident; not a scratch on any ship.

"Is n't it magnificent?" said Roosevelt, as he toasted the Admirals and Captains in the cabin of the *Mayflower*. "Nobody after this will forget that the American coast is on the Pacific as well as on the Atlantic." Ten days later he left the White House, and after he left, the prestige of the American Fleet was slowly frittered away.

So important is it, if we would form a just estimate of Roosevelt, to understand his attitude towards war, that I must refer to the subject briefly here. One of the most authoritative observers of international politics now living, a man who has also had the best opportunity for studying the chief statesmen of our age, wrote me after Roosevelt's death: "I deeply grieve with you in the loss of our friend. He was an extraordinary man. The only point in which I ever found myself seriously differing from him was in the value he set upon war. He did not seem to realize how great an evil it is, and in how many ways, fascinated as he was by the virtues which it sometimes called out; but in this respect, also, I think his views expanded and mellowed as time

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went on. His mind was so capacious as to take in Old-World affairs in a sense which very few people outside Europe, since Hamilton, have been able to do."

Now the truth is that neither the eminent person who wrote this letter, nor many others among us, saw as clearly during the first decade of this century as Roosevelt saw that war was not a remote possibility, but a very real danger. I think that he was almost the first in the United States to feel the menace of Germany to the entire world. He knew the strength of her army, and when she began to build rapidly a powerful navy, he understood that the likelihood of her breaking the peace was more than doubled; for with the fleet she could at pleasure go up and down the seas, picking quarrels as she went. If war came on a great scale in Europe, our Republic would probably be involved; we should either take sides and so have to furnish a contingent, or we should restrict our operations to self-defense. In either case we must be prepared.

But Roosevelt recognized also that on the completion of the Panama Canal we might be exposed to much international friction, and unless we were ready to defend the Canal and its approaches, a Foreign Power might easily do it great damage or wrest it from us, at least for a time. Here, too, was another

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motive for facing the possibility of war. We were growing up in almost childish trust in a world filled with warlike nations, which regarded war not only as the obvious way in which to settle disputes, but as the easiest way to seize the territory and the wealth of rich neighbors who could not defend themselves.

This being the condition of life as our country had to lead it, we were criminally remiss in not taking precautions. But Roosevelt went farther than this; he believed that, war or no war, a nation must be able to defend itself; so must every individual be. Every youth should have sufficient military training to fit him to take his place at a moment's notice in the national armament. This did not mean the maintenance of a large standing army, or the adoption of a soul- and character-killing system of militarism like the German. It meant giving training to every youth who was physically sound which would develop and strengthen his body, teach him obedience, and impress upon him his patriotic duty to his country.

I was among those who, twenty years ago, feared that Roosevelt's projects were inspired by innate pugnacity which he could not outgrow. Now, in this year of his death, I recognize that he was right, and I believe that there is no one, on whom the lesson of the Atrocious War has not been lost, who does not believe in his gospel of military training, both for its

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value in promoting physical fitness and health and in providing the country with competent defenders. Roosevelt detested as much as any one the horrors of war, but, as he had too much reason to remind the American people shortly before his death, there are things worse than war. And when in 1919 President Charles W. Eliot becomes the chief advocate of universal military training, we need not fear that it is synonymous with militarism.

On one subject — a protective tariff — I think that Roosevelt was less satisfactory than on any other. At Harvard, in our college days, John Stuart Mill's ideas on economics prevailed, and they were ably expounded by Charles F. Dunbar, who then stood first among American economists. Being a consistent Individualist, and believing that liberty is a principle which applies to commerce, not less than to intellectual and moral freedom, Mill, of course, insisted on Free Trade. But after Roosevelt joined the Republican Party — in the straw vote for President, in 1880, he had voted like a large majority of undergraduates for Bayard, a Democrat — he adopted Protection as the right principle in theory and in practice. The teachings of Alexander Hamilton, the wonderful spokesman of Federalism, the champion of a strong Government which should be beneficent because it was unselfish and enlightened,

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captivated and filled him. In 1886, in his Life of Benton, he wrote: "Free traders are apt to look at the tariff from a sentimental standpoint; but it is in reality a purely business matter and should be decided solely on grounds of expediency. Political economists have pretty generally agreed that protection is vicious in theory and harmful in practice; but if the majority of the people in interest wish it, and it affects only themselves, there is no earthly reason why they should not be allowed to try the experiment to their heart's content."[1]

Perhaps we ought to infer from this extract that Roosevelt, as an historical critic, strove to preserve an open mind; as an ardent Republican, however, he never wavered in his support of the tariff. Even his sense of humor permitted him to swallow without a smile the demagogue's cant about "infant industries," or the raising of the tariff after election by the Republicans who had promised to reduce it. To those of us who for many years regarded the tariff as the dividing line between the parties, his stand was most disappointing. And when the head of one of the chief Trusts in America cynically blurted out, "The Tariff is the mother of Trusts," we hoped that Roosevelt, who had then begun his stupendous battle with the Trusts, would deal them a staggering blow

[1] Roosevelt: *Thomas H. Benton*, 67. American Statesmen Series.

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by shattering the tariff. But, greatly to our chagrin, he did nothing.

His enemies tried to explain his callousness to this reform by hinting that he had some personal interest at stake, or that he was under obligations to tariff magnates. Nothing could be more absurd than these innuendoes; from the first of his career to the last, no man ever brought proof that he had directly or indirectly secured Roosevelt's backing by questionable means. And there were times enough when passions ran so high that any one who could produce an iota of such testimony would have done so. The simple fact is, that in looking over the field of important questions which Roosevelt believed must be met by new legislation, he looked on the tariff as unimportant in comparison with railroads, and conservation, and the measures for public health. I think, also, that he never studied the question thoroughly; he threw over Mill's Individualism early in his public career and with it went Mill's political economy. As late as December, 1912, after the affronting Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act had been passed under his Republican successor, I reminded Roosevelt that I had never voted for him because I did not approve of his tariff policy. To which he replied, almost in the words of the Benton extract in 1886, "My dear boy, the tariff is only a question of expediency."

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In this field also I fear that we must score a miss against him.

Cavour used to say that he did not need to resort to craft, which was supposed to be a statesman's favorite instrument, he simply told the truth and everybody was deceived. Roosevelt might have said the same thing. His critics were always on the lookout for some ulterior motive, some trick, or cunning thrust, in what he did; consequently they misjudged him, for he usually did the most direct thing in the most direct way.

The Brownsville Affair proved this. On the night of August 13, 1906, several colored soldiers stationed at Fort Brown, Texas, stole from their quarters into the near-by town of Brownsville and shot up the inhabitants, against whom they had a grudge. As soon as the news of the outbreak reached the fort, the rest of the colored garrison was called out to quell it, and the guilty soldiers, under cover of darkness, joined their companions and were undiscovered. Next day the commander began an investigation, but as none of the culprits confessed, the President discharged nearly all of the three companies. Thereupon his critics insinuated that Roosevelt had indulged his race hatred of the blacks; a few years before, many of these same critics had accused him of wishing to insult the Southern whites by inviting

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Booker Washington to lunch. The reason for his action with the Brownsville criminals was so clear that it did not need to be stated. He intended that every soldier or sailor who wore the uniform of the United States, be he white, yellow, or black, should not be allowed to sully that uniform and go unpunished. He felt the stain on the service keenly; in spite of denunciation he trusted that the common sense of the Nation would eventually uphold him, as it did.

A few months later he came to Cambridge to make his famous "Mollycoddle Speech," and in greeting him, three or four of us asked him jokingly, "How about Brownsville?" "Brownsville?" he replied, laughing; "Brownsville will soon be forgotten, but 'Dear Maria' will stick to me all my life."

This referred to another annoyance which had recently bothered him. He had always been used to talk among friends about public matters and persons with amazing unreserve. He took it for granted that those to whom he spoke would regard his frank remarks as confidential; being honorable himself, he assumed a similar sense of honor in his listeners. In one instance, however, he was deceived. Among the guests at the White House were a gentleman and his wife. The latter was a convert to Roman Catholicism, and she had not only all the proverbial zeal of a convert, but an amount of indiscretion

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which seems incredible in any one. She often led the conversation to Roman Catholic subjects, and especially to the discussion of who was likely to be the next American Cardinal. President Roosevelt had great respect for Archbishop Ireland, and he said, frankly, that he should be glad to see the red hat go to him. The lady's husband was appointed to a foreign Embassy, and they were both soon thrown into an Ultramontane atmosphere, where clerical intrigues had long furnished one of the chief amusements of a vapid and corrupt Court. The lady, who, of course, could not have realized the impropriety, made known the President's regard for Archbishop Ireland. She even had letters to herself beginning "Dear Maria," to prove the intimate terms on which she and her husband stood with Mr. Roosevelt, and to suggest how important a personage she was in his estimation. Assured, as she thought, of her influence in Washington, she seems also to have aspired to equal influence in the Vatican. That would not be the first occasion on which Cardinals' hats had been bestowed through the benign feminine intercession. Reports from Rome were favorable; Archbishop Ireland's prospects looked rosy.

But the post of Cardinal is so eminent that there are always several candidates for each vacancy. I do not know whether or not it came about through one

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of Archbishop Ireland's rivals, or through "Dear Maria's" own indiscretion, but the fact leaked out that President Roosevelt was personally interested in Archbishop Ireland's success. That settled the Archbishop. The Hierarchy would never consent to be influenced by an American President, who was also a Protestant. It might take instructions from the Emperor of Austria or the King of Spain; it had even allowed the German Kaiser, also a Protestant, indirectly but effectually to block the election of Cardinal Rampolla to be Pope in 1903; but the hint that the Archbishop of St. Paul, Minnesota, might be made Cardinal because the American President respected him, could not be tolerated. The President's letters beginning "Dear Maria" went gayly through the newspapers of the world, and the man in the street everywhere wondered how Roosevelt could have been so indiscreet as to have trusted so imprudent a zealot. "Dear Maria" and her husband were recalled from their Embassy and put out of reach of committing further indiscretions of that sort. Archbishop Ireland never became Cardinal. In spite of the President's forebodings, the "Dear Maria" incident did not cling to him all his life, but sank into oblivion, while the world, busied with matters of real importance, rushed on towards a great catastrophe. Proofs that a man or a woman

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can do very foolish things are so common that "Dear Maria" could not win lasting fame by hers.

I do not think, however, that this experience taught Roosevelt reticence. He did not lose his faith that a sense of honor was widespread, and would silence the tongues of the persons whom he talked to in confidence.

No President ever spoke so openly to newspaper men as he did. He told them many a secret with only the warning, "Mind, this is private," and none of them betrayed him. When he entered the White House he gathered all the newspaper men round him, and said that no mention was to be made of Mrs. Roosevelt, or of any detail of their family life, while they lived there. If this rule were broken, he would refuse for the rest of his term to allow the representative of the paper which published the unwarranted report to enter the White House, or to receive any of the President's communications. This rule also was religiously observed, with the result that Mrs. Roosevelt was spared the disgust and indignity of a vulgar publicity, which had thrown its lurid light on more than one "First Lady of the Land" in previous administrations, and even on the innocent Baby McKee, President Harrison's grandchild.

We cannot too often bear in mind that Theodore

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Roosevelt never forgot the Oneness of Society. If he aimed at correcting an industrial or financial abuse by special laws, he knew that this work could be partial only. It might promote the health of the entire body, but it was not equivalent to sanifying that entire body. There was no general remedy. A plaster applied to a skin cut does not cure an internal disease. But he watched the unexpected effects of laws and saw how that influence spread from one field to another.

Roosevelt traced closely the course of Law and Custom to their ultimate objects, the family and the individual. In discussing the matter with Mr. Rhodes he cordially agreed with what the historian said about our American rich men. He insisted that the same thing held true of our politicians, even the worst: that the average Roman rich man, like the average Roman public man, of the end of the Republic and of the beginning of the Empire, makes the corresponding man of our own time look like a self-denying, conscientious Puritan. He did not think very highly of the American multi-millionaire, nor of his wife, sons, and daughters when compared with some other types of our citizens; even in ability the plutocrat did not seem to Roosevelt to show up very strongly save in his own narrowly limited field; and he and his womanhood, and those of less fortune who mod-

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eled their lives upon his and upon the lives of his wife and children, struck Roosevelt as taking very little advantage of their opportunities. But to denounce them with hysterical exaggeration as resembling the unspeakable tyrants and debauchees of classic times, was simple nonsense.

Roosevelt hoped he had been of some assistance in moving our people along the line Mr. Rhodes mentioned; that is, along the line of a sane, moderate purpose to supervise the business use of wealth and to curb its excesses, while keeping as far aloof from the policy of the visionary and demagogue as from the policy of the wealthy corruptionist.

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CHAPTER XIX

CHOOSING HIS SUCCESSOR

CRITICS frequently remark that Roosevelt was the most masterful politician of his time, and what we have already seen of his career should justify this assertion. We need, however, to define what we mean by "politician." Boss Platt, of New York, was a politician, but far removed from Roosevelt. Platt and all similar dishonest manipulators of voters — and the dishonesty took many forms — held their power, not by principles, but by exerting an unprincipled influence over the masses who supported them. Roosevelt, on the other hand, was a great politician because he saw earlier than most men certain fundamental principles which he resolved to carry through whether the Bosses or their supporters liked it or not. In a word he believed in principles rather than in men. He was a statesman, and like the statesman he understood that half a loaf is often better than no bread and that, though he must often compromise and conciliate, he must surrender nothing essential.

As a result, his career as Assemblyman, as Civil Service Commissioner, as Police Commissioner of

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New York City, as Governor of New York State, and as President, seems a continuous rising scale of success. We see the achievement which swallows up the baffling difficulties and the stubborn opposition. These we must always remember if we would measure the extent of the victory. It was Roosevelt's persistence and his refusal to be baffled or turned aside which really made him seem to triumph in all his work.

He never doubted, as I have often said, the necessity of party organization in our political system, although he recognized the tendency to corruption in it, the unreasoning loyalty which it bred and its substitution of Party for Country in its teaching. He had known something of political machine methods at Albany. After he became President, he knew them through and through as they were practiced on national proportions at Washington. The Machine had hoped to shelve him by making him Vice-President, and in spite of it he suddenly emerged as President. This confrontation would have been embarrassing on both sides if Roosevelt had not displayed unexpected tact. He avowed his purpose of carrying out McKinley's policies and he kept it faithfully, thus relieving the Machine of much anxiety. By his straightforwardness he even won the approval of Boss Quay, the lifelong political bandit

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THE LAST CABINET MEETING

Left to Right: Roosevelt, Cortelyou, Bonaparte, Newberry, Wilson, Straus, Bacon, Wright, Meyer, Garfield

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from Pennsylvania, who went to him and said in substance: 'I believe that you are square and I will stand by you until you prove otherwise.' Roosevelt made no bargain, but like a sensible man he did not forbid Quay from voting on his side. Personally, also, Quay's lack of hypocrisy attracted him; for Quay never pretended that he was in politics to promote the Golden Rule and he had skirted so close to the Penal Code that he knew how it looked and how he could evade it. Senator Hanna, the Ohio political Boss, who had made McKinley President by ways which cannot all be documented except by persons who have examined the Recording Angel's book (and research students of that original source never return), was another towering figure whom Roosevelt had to get along with. He found out how to do it, and to do it so amicably that it was reported that he breakfasted often with the Ohio Senator and that they even ate griddle-cakes and scrapple together. The Senator evidently no more understood the alert and fascinating young President than we understand what is going on in the brain of a playful young tiger, but instinct warned him that this mysterious young creature, electrified by a thousand talents, was dangerous and must be held down. And so with the other members of the Republican Machine which ran both Houses of Congress and ex-

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pected to run the undisciplined President too. Roosevelt studied them all and discovered how to deal with each.

At the beginning of the year 1904, everybody began to discuss the next Presidential campaign. Who should be the Republican candidate? The President, naturally, wished to be elected and thereby to hold the office in his own right and not by the chance of assassination. Senator Hanna surprised many of the politicians by bagging a good many delegates for himself. He probably did not desire to be President; like Warwick he preferred the glory of king-maker to that of king; but he was a shrewd business man who knew the value of having goods which, although he did not care for them himself, he might exchange for others. I doubt whether he deluded himself into supposing that the American people would elect so conspicuous a representative of the Big Interests as he was, to be President, but he knew that the fortunes of candidates in political conventions are uncertain, and that if he had a considerable body of delegates to swing from one man to another, he might, if his choice won, become the power behind the new throne as he had been behind McKinley's. And if we could suspect him of humor he may have enjoyed fun to a mild degree in keeping the irrepressible Roosevelt in a state of suspense.

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Senator Hanna's death, however, in March, 1904, removed the only competitor whom Roosevelt could have regarded as dangerous. Thenceforth he held the field, and yet, farseeing politician though he was, he did not feel sure. The Convention at Chicago nominated him, virtually, by acclamation. In the following months of a rather slow campaign he had fits of depression, although all signs pointed to his success. Talking with Hay as late as October 30, he said: "It seems a cheap sort of thing to say, and I would not say it to other people, but laying aside my own great personal interests and hopes, — for of course I desire intensely to succeed, — I have the greatest pride that in this fight we are not only making it on clearly avowed principles, but we have the principles and the record to avow. How can I help being a little proud when I contrast the men and the considerations by which I am attacked, and those by which I am defended?" [1]

Just at the end, the campaign was enlivened by the attack which the Democratic candidate, Judge Alton B. Parker, made upon his opponent. He charged that Mr. Cortelyou, the manager of the Republican campaign, had received great sums of money from the Big Interests, and that he had, indeed, been appointed manager because, from his

[1] W. R. Thayer: *John Hay*, II, 356, 357.

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previous experience as Secretary of the Department of Commerce, he had special information in regard to malefactors of great wealth which would enable him to coerce them to good purpose for the Republican Corruption Fund. President Roosevelt published a letter denying Judge Parker's statements as "unqualifiedly and atrociously false." If Judge Parker's attack had any effect on the election it was to reduce his own votes. Later, Edward H. Harriman, the railroad magnate, tried to smirch Roosevelt by accusing him of seeking Harriman's help in 1904, but this charge also was never sustained.

At the election on November 8, Roosevelt had a majority of nearly two million and a half votes out of thirteen million and a half cast, thus securing by large odds the greatest popular majority any President has had. The Electoral College gave him 336 votes and Parker 140. That same evening, his victory being assured, he dictated the following statement to the press: "The wise custom which limits the President to two terms, regards the substance and not the form, and under no circumstances will I be a candidate for and accept the nomination for another." Those who heard this statement, or who had talked the matter over with Roosevelt, understood that he had in mind a renomination in 1908, but many persons regarded it as his final renuncia-

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tion of ever being a candidate for the Presidency. And later, when circumstances quite altered the situation, this "promise" was revived to plague him.

From March 4, 1905, he was President "in his own right." Behind him stood the American people, and he was justified in regarding himself, at that time, as the most popular President since Washington. The unprecedented majority of votes he had received at the election proved that, and proved also that the country believed in "his policies." So he might go ahead to carry out and to extend the general reforms which he had embarked on against much opposition. No one could question that he had a mandate from the people, and during his second term he was still more aggressive.

Now, however, came the little rift which widened and widened and at last opened a great chasm between Roosevelt and the people on one side and the Machine dominators of the Republican Party on the other. For although Roosevelt was the choice of the Republicans and of migratory voters from other parties, although he was, in fact, the idol of millions who supported him, the Republican Machine insisted on ruling. Before an election, the Machine consents to a candidate who can win, but after he has been elected the Machine instinctively acts as his master. A strong man, like President Cleveland,

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may hold out against the Bosses of his party, but the penalty he has to pay is to find himself bereft of support and his party shattered. This might have happened in Roosevelt's case also, if he had not been more tactful than Cleveland was in dealing with his enemies.

He now had to learn the bitter knowledge of the trials which beset a President whose vision outsoars that of the practical rulers of his party. In the House of Representatives there was a little group led by the Speaker, Joseph G. Cannon, of Illinois, who controlled that part of Congress with despotic arrogance. In the Senate there was a similar group of political oligarchs, called the Steering Committee, which decided what questions should be discussed, what bills should be killed, and what others should be passed. Aldrich, of Rhode Island, headed this. A multi-millionaire himself, he was the particular advocate of the Big Interests. Next came Allison, of Iowa, an original Republican, who entered Congress in 1863 and remained there for the rest of his life, a hide-bound party man, personally honest and sufficiently prominent to be "talked of" for Vice-President on several occasions. He was rather the peacemaker of the Steering Committee, having the art of reconciling antagonists and of smoothing annoying angles. A little older, was Orville H. Platt,

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the Senator from Connecticut who died in 1905, and was esteemed a model of virtue among the Senators of his time. As an offset to the men of threescore and ten and over was Albert J. Beveridge, the young Senator from Indiana, vigorous, eloquent, fearless, and radical, whose mind and heart were consecrated to Roosevelt. Beveridge, at least, had no ties, secret or open, with the Trusts, or the Interests, or Wall Street; on the contrary, he attacked them fiercely, and among other Anti-Trust legislation he drove through the Meat Inspection Bill. How he managed to get on with the gray wolves of the Committee it would be interesting to hear; but we must rid ourselves of the notion that those gray wolves sought personal profit in money by their steering. None of them was charged with using his position for the benefit of his purse. Power was what those politicians desired; Power, which gave them the opportunity to make the political tenets of their party prevail. Orville Platt, or Allison, regarded Republicanism with almost religious fanaticism; and we need not search far in history to find fanatics who were personally very good and tender-hearted men, but who would put heretics to death with a smile of pious satisfaction.

Roosevelt's task was to persuade the Steering Committee to support him in as many of his Radical

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measures as he could. They had done this during his first Administration, partly because they did not see whither he was leading. Senator Hanna, then a member of the Steering Committee, attempted to steady all Republicans who seemed likely to be seduced by Roosevelt's subversive novelties by telling them to "stand pat," and, as we look back now, the Senator from Ohio, with his stand-pattism broom reminds us of the portly Mrs. Partington trying to sweep back the inflowing Atlantic Ocean. During the second Administration, however, no one could plead ignorance or surprise when Roosevelt urged on new projects. He made no secret of his policies, and he could not have disguised, if he would, the fact that he was thorough. By a natural tendency the "Stand-Patters" drew closer together. Similarly the various elements which followed Roosevelt tended to combine. Already some of these were beginning to be called "Insurgents," but this name did not frighten them nor did it shame them back into the fold of the orthodox Republicans. As Roosevelt continued his fight for reclamation, conservation, health, and pure foods, and governmental control of the great monopolies, the opposition to him, on the part of the capitalists affected, grew more intense. What wonder that these men, realizing at last that their unlimited privileges would be taken

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away from them, resented their deprivation. The privileged classes in England have not welcomed the suggestion that their great landed estates shall be cut up, nor can we expect that the American dukes and marquises of oil and steel and copper and transportation should look forward with meek acquiescence to their own extinction.

Nevertheless, there is no politics in politics, and so the gray wolves who ran the Republican Party, knowing that Roosevelt, and not themselves, had the determining popular support of the country, were too wary to block him entirely as the Democrats had done under Cleveland. They let his bills go through, but with more evident reluctance, only after bitter fighting. And as they were nearly all church members in good standing, we can imagine that they prayed the Lord to hasten the day when this pestilent marplot in the White House should retire from office. Trusting Roosevelt so far as to believe that he would stand by his pledge not to be a candidate in 1908, they cast about for a person of their own stripe whom they could make the country accept.

But Roosevelt himself felt too deeply involved in the cause of Reform, which he had been pushing for seven years, to allow his successor to be dictated by the Stand-Patters. So he sought among his associates

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in the Cabinet for the member who, judging by their work together, would most loyally carry on his policies, and at length he decided upon William H. Taft, his Secretary of War. "Root would make the better President, but Taft would be the better candidate," Theodore wrote to an intimate, and that opinion was generally held in Washington and elsewhere. Mr. Root had so conducted the Department of State, since the death of John Hay, that many good judges regarded him as the ablest of all the Secretaries of that Department, and Roosevelt himself went even farther. "Root," he said to me, "is the greatest intellectual force in American public life since Lincoln." But in his career as lawyer, which brought him to the head of the American Bar, he had been attorney for powerful corporations, and that being the time when the Government was fighting the Corporations, it was not supposed that his candidacy would be popular. So Taft was preferred to him.

The Republican Machine accepted Taft as a candidate with composure, if not with enthusiasm. Any one would be better than Roosevelt in the eyes of the Machine and its supporters, and perhaps they perceived in Secretary Taft qualities not wholly unsympathetic. They were probably thankful, also, that Roosevelt had not demanded more. He allowed

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the "regulars" to choose the nominee for Vice-President, and he did not meddle with the make-up of the Republican National Committee. One of his critics, Dean Lewis, marks this as Roosevelt's chief political blunder, because by leaving the Republican National Committee in command he virtually predetermined the policy of the next four years. Only a very strong President with equal zeal and fighting quality could win against the Committee. In 1908 he had them so docile that he might have changed their membership, and changed the rules by which elections were governed if he had so willed, but, just as before the election of 1904, Roosevelt had doubted his own popularity in the country, so now he missed his chance because he did not wish to seem to wrest from the unwilling Machine powers which it lost no time in using against him.

The campaign never reached a dramatic crisis. Mr. Bryan, the Democratic candidate, who still posed as the Boy Orator of the Platte, although he had passed forty-eight years of age, made a spirited canvass, and when the votes were counted he gained more than a million and a third over the total for Judge Parker in 1904. But Mr. Taft won easily by a million and a quarter votes.

Between election and inauguration an ominous disillusion set in. The Rooseveltians had taken it for

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granted that the new President would carry on the policies of the old; more than that, the impression prevailed among them that the high officials of the Roosevelt Administration, including some members of his Cabinet, would be retained, but when Inauguration Day came, it appeared that Mr. Taft had chosen a new set of advisers, and he denied that he had given any one reason to believe that he would do otherwise.

March 4, 1909, was a wintry day in Washington. A snowstorm and high winds prevented holding the inaugural exercises out of doors as usual on the East Front of the Capitol. President Roosevelt and President-elect Taft drove in state down Pennsylvania Avenue, and Mr. Taft, having taken the oath of office, delivered his inaugural address in the Senate Chamber. The ceremonies being over, Mr. Roosevelt, instead of accompanying the new President to the White House, went to the railway station and took the train for New York. This innovation had been planned some time before, because Mr. Roosevelt had arranged to sail for Europe in a few days, and needed to reach Oyster Bay as soon as possible to complete his preparations.

Many an eye-witness who watched him leave, as a simple civilian, the Hall of Congress, must have felt that with his going there closed one of the most

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memorable administrations this country had ever known. Roosevelt departed, but his invisible presence still filled the capital city and frequented every quarter of the Nation.

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CHAPTER XX

WORLD HONORS

WHAT to do with ex-Presidents is a problem which worries those happy Americans who have nothing else to worry over. They think of an ex-President as of a sacred white elephant, who must not work, although he has probably too little money to keep him alive in proper ease and dignity. In fact, however, these gentlemen have managed, at least during the past half-century, to sink back into the civilian mass from which they emerged without suffering want themselves or dimming the lustre which radiates from the office. Roosevelt little thought that in quitting the Presidency he was not going into political obscurity.

Roosevelt had two objects in view when he left the White House. He sought long and complete rest, and to place himself beyond the reach of politicians. In fairness, he wished to give Mr. Taft a free field, which would hardly have been possible if Roosevelt had remained in Washington or New York, where politicians might have had access to him.

Accordingly, he planned to hunt big game in Africa for a year, and in order to have a definite pur-

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pose, which might give his expedition lasting usefulness, he arranged to collect specimens for the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. His second son, Kermit, then twenty years of age, besides several naturalists and hunters, accompanied him. His expedition sailed from New York on March 23d, touched at the Azores and at Gibraltar, where the English Commander showed him the fortifications, and transshipped at Naples into an East-African liner. He found his stateroom filled with flowers sent by his admiring friend, Kaiser William II, with a telegram of effusive greeting, and with messages and tokens from minor potentates. More important to him than these tributes, however, was the presence of Frederick C. Selous, the most famous hunter of big game in Africa, who joined the ship and proved a congenial fellow passenger. They reached Mombasa on April 23d, and after the caravan had been made ready, they started for the interior.

We need not follow in detail the year which Roosevelt and his party spent in his African hunting. The railroad took them to Lake Victoria Nyanza, but they stopped at many places on the way, and made long excursions into the country. Then from the Lake they proceeded to the Albert Nyanza and steamed down the Nile to Gondokoro, which they reached on February 26, 1910. On March 14th at

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Khartoum, where Mrs. Roosevelt and their daughter Ethel awaited them, Roosevelt emerged into civilization again. He and Kermit had shot 512 beasts and birds, of which they kept about a dozen for trophies, the rest going to the Smithsonian Institution and to the museums. A few of their specimens were unique, and the total product of the expedition was the most important which had ever reached America from Africa.

After spending a few days in visiting Omdurman and other scenes connected with the British conquest of the Mahdists, less than a dozen years before, the Roosevelts went down the river to Cairo, where the ex-President addressed the Egyptian students. These were the backbone of the so-called Nationalist Party, which aimed at driving out the British and had killed the Prime Minister a month before. They warned Roosevelt that if he dared to touch on this subject he, too, would be assassinated. But such threats did not move him then or ever. Roosevelt reproved them point-blank for killing Boutros Pasha, and told them that a party which sought freedom must show its capacity for living by law and order, before it could expect to deserve freedom.

From Egypt, Roosevelt crossed to Naples, and then began what must be described as a triumphal progress through Central and Western Europe. Only

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General Grant, after his Presidency, had made a similar tour, but he did not excite a tenth of the popular interest and enthusiasm which Roosevelt excited. Although Grant had the prestige of being the successful general of the most tremendous war ever fought in America, he had nothing picturesque or magnetic in his personality. The peasants in the remote regions had heard of Roosevelt; persons of every class in the cities knew about him a little more definitely; and all were keen to see him. Except Garibaldi, no modern ever set multitudes on fire as Roosevelt did, and Garibaldi was the hero of a much narrower sphere and had the advantage of being the hero of the then downtrodden masses. Roosevelt, on the other hand, belonged to the ruling class in America, had served nearly eight years as President of the United States, and was equally the popular idol without class distinction. And he had just come from a very remarkable exploit, having led his scientific and hunting expedition for twelve months through the perils and hardships of tropical Africa. We Americans may well thrill with satisfaction to remember that it was this most typical of Americans who received the honors and homage of the world precisely because he was most typically American and strikingly individual.

Before he reached Italy on his way back, he had

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invitations from most of the sovereigns of Europe to visit them, and universities and learned bodies requested him to address them. At Rome, as guest of King Victor Emanuel II, he received ovations of the exuberant and throbbing kind, which only the Italians can give. But here also occurred what might have been, but for his common sense and courage, a hitch in his triumphal progress. The intriguers of the Vatican, always on the alert to edify the Roman Catholics in the United States, thought they saw a chance to exalt themselves and humble the Protestants by stipulating that Colonel Roosevelt, who had accepted an invitation to call upon the Pope, should not visit any Protestant organization while he was in that city. Some time before, Vice-President Fairbanks had incensed Cardinal Merry del Val, the Papal Secretary, and his group, by remarks at the Methodist College in Rome. Here was a dazzling opportunity for not only getting even, but for coming out victorious. If the Vatican schemers could force Colonel Roosevelt, who, at the moment, was the greatest figure in the world, to obey their orders, they might exult in the sight of all the nations. Should he balk, he would draw down upon himself a hostile Catholic vote at home. Probably the good-natured Pope himself understood little about the intrigue and took little part in it, for Pius X was rather a kindly and

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a genuinely pious pontiff. But Cardinal Merry del Val, apt pupil of the Jesuits, made an egregious blunder if he expected to catch Theodore Roosevelt in a Papal trap. The Rector of the American Catholic College in Rome wrote: "'The Holy Father will be delighted to grant audience to Mr. Roosevelt on April 5th, and hopes nothing will arise to prevent it, such as the much-regretted incident which made the reception of Mr. Fairbanks impossible.' Roosevelt replied to our Ambassador as follows: 'On the other hand, I in my turn must decline to have any stipulations made or submit to any conditions which in any way limit my freedom of conduct.' To this the Vatican replied through our Ambassador: 'In view of the circumstances for which neither His Holiness nor Mr. Roosevelt is responsible, an audience could not occur except on the understanding expressed in the former message.'" [1]

Ex-President Roosevelt did not, by calling upon the Pope, furnish Cardinal Merry del Val with cause to gloat. A good while afterward in talking over the matter with me, Roosevelt dismissed it with "No self-respecting American could allow his actions or his going and coming to be dictated to him by any Pope or King." That, to him, was so self-evident a fact that it required no discussion; and the American

[1] Washburn, 164.

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people, including probably a large majority of Roman Catholics, agreed with him.

From Rome he went to Austria, to Vienna first, where the aged Emperor, Francis Joseph, welcomed him; and then to Budapest, where the Hungarians, eager for their independence, shouted themselves hoarse at sight of the representative of American independence. Wherever he went the masses in the cities crowded round him and the people in the country flocked to cheer him as he passed. Since Norway had conferred on him the Nobel Peace Prize after the Russo-Japanese War, he journeyed to Christiania to pay his respects to the Nobel Committee, and there he delivered an address on the conditions necessary for a universal peace in which he foreshadowed many of the terms which have since been preached by the advocates of a League of Nations. In Berlin, the Kaiser received him with ostentatious friendliness. He addressed him as "Friend Roosevelt." Since the Colonel was not a monarch the Kaiser could not address him as "Brother" or as "Cousin," and the word "Friend" disguised whatever condescension he may have felt. There was a grand military review of twelve thousand troops, which the Kaiser and his "Friend" inspected, and he took care to inform Roosevelt that he was the first civilian to whom this honor had ever been paid. An Imperial photographer

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made snapshots of the Colonel and the Kaiser, and these were subsequently given to the Colonel with superscriptions and comments written by the Kaiser on the negatives. Roosevelt's impression of his Imperial host was, on the whole, favorable. I do not think he regarded him as very solid, personally, but he recognized the results of the power which William's inherited position as Emperor conferred on him.

Paris did not fall behind any of the other European capitals in the enthusiasm of its welcome. There, Roosevelt was received in solemn session by the Sorbonne, before which he spoke on citizenship in a Republic, and, with prophetic vision, he warned against the seductions of phrase-makers as among the insidious dangers to which Republics were exposed.

His most conspicuous triumph, however, was in England. On May 6th, King Edward VII died, and President Taft appointed Colonel Roosevelt special envoy, to represent the United States at the royal funeral. This drew together crowned heads from all parts of Europe, so that at one of the State functions at Buckingham Palace there were no fewer than thirteen monarchs at table. The Colonel stayed at Dorchester House with the American Ambassador, Mr. Whitelaw Reid, and was beset by calls and invita-

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tions from the crowned personages. I have heard him give a most amusing account of that experience, but it is too soon to repeat it. Then, as always, he could tell a bore at sight, and the bore could not deceive him by any disguise of ermine cloak or Imperial title. The German Kaiser seems to have taken pains to pose as the preferred intimate of "Friend Roosevelt," but the "Friend" remained unwaveringly Democratic. One day William telephoned to ask Roosevelt to lunch with him, but the Colonel diplomatically pleaded a sore throat, and declined. At another time when the Kaiser wished him to come and chat, Roosevelt replied that he would with pleasure, but that he had only twenty minutes at the Kaiser's disposal, as he had already arranged to call on Mrs. Humphry Ward at three-thirty. These reminiscences may seem trifling, unless you take them as illustrating the truly Democratic simplicity with which the First Citizen of the American Republic met the scions of the Hapsburgs and the Hohenzollerns on equal terms as gentleman with gentlemen.

Some of his backbiters and revilers at home whispered that his head was turned by all these pageants and courtesies of kings, and that he regretted that our system provided for no monarch. This afforded him infinite amusement. "Think of it!" he said to me after his return. "They even say that I want to be a

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prince myself! Not I! I've seen too many of them! Do you know what a prince is? He's a cross between Ward McAllister and Vice-President Fairbanks. How can any one suppose I should like to be that?" It may be necessary to inform the later generation that Mr. Ward McAllister was by profession a decayed gentleman in New York City who achieved fame by compiling a list of the Four Hundred persons whom he condescended to regard as belonging to New York Society. Vice-President Fairbanks was an Indiana politician, tall and thin and oppressively taciturn, who seemed to be stricken dumb by the weight of an immemorial ancestry or by the sense of his own importance; and who was not less cold than dumb, so that irreverent jokers reported that persons might freeze to death in his presence if they came too near or stayed too long.

All this was only the froth on the stream of Roosevelt's experience in England. He took deep enjoyment in meeting the statesmen and the authors and the learned men there. The City of London bestowed the freedom of the city upon him. The Universities of Cambridge and Oxford gave him their highest honorary degrees. At the London Guildhall he made a memorable address, in which he warned the British nation to see to it that the grievances of the Egyptian people were not allowed to fester. Critics at the

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moment chided this advice as an exhibition of bad taste; an intrusion, if not an impertinence, on the part of a foreigner. They did not know, however, that before speaking, Roosevelt submitted his remarks to high officers in the Government and had their approval; for apparently they were well pleased that this burning topic should be brought under discussion by means of Roosevelt's warning.

At Cambridge University he exhorted the students not to be satisfied with a life of sterile athleticism. "I never was an athlete," said he, "although I have always led an outdoor life, and have accomplished something in it, simply because my theory is that almost any man can do a great deal, if he will, by getting the utmost possible service out of the qualities that he actually possesses. . . . The average man who is successful — the average statesman, the average public servant, the average soldier, who wins what we call great success — is not a genius. He is a man who has merely the ordinary qualities that he shares with his fellows, but who has developed those ordinary qualities to a more than ordinary degree."

The culmination of his addresses abroad was his Romanes Lecture, delivered at the Convocation at Oxford University on June 7, 1910. Lord Curzon, the Chancellor, presided. Roosevelt took for his theme, "Biological Analogies in History," a subject which

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his lifelong interest in natural history and his considerable reading in scientific theory made appropriate. He afterwards said that in order not to commit shocking blunders he consulted freely his old friend Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, head of the Museum of Natural History in New York City, but the substance and ideas were unquestionably his own.

Dr. Henry Goudy, "the public orator" at Cambridge, in a Presentation Speech, eulogized Roosevelt's manifold activities and achievements, declaring, among other things, that he had "acquired a title to be ranked with his great predecessor Abraham Lincoln — 'of whom one conquered slavery, and the other corruption.'" Lord Curzon addressed him as, "peer of the most august kings, queller of wars, destroyer of monsters wherever found, yet the most human of mankind, deeming nothing indifferent to you, not even the blackest of the black."

This cluster of foreign addresses is not the least remarkable of Roosevelt's intellectual feats. No doubt among those who listened to him in each place there were carping critics, scholars who did not find his words scholarly enough, dilettanti made tepid by over-culture, intellectual cormorants made heavy by too much information, who found no novelty in what he said, and were insensible to the rush and freshness of his style. But in spite of these he did plant in each

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audience thoughts which they remembered, and he touched upon a range of interests which no other man then alive could have made to seem equally vital.

On June 18th Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt reached New York. All the way up the harbor from Sandy Hook, he was escorted by a vast concourse of vessels, large and small, tugs, steamboats, and battleships. At the Narrows, Fort Wadsworth greeted him with the Presidential salute of twenty-one guns. The revenue-cutter, *Androscoggin*, took him from the *Kaiserin Auguste Victoria*, on which he had crossed the ocean, and landed him at the Battery. There an immense multitude awaited him. Mayor Strong bade him welcome, to which he replied briefly in affectionate words to his fellow countrymen. Then began a triumphal procession up Broadway, and up Fifth Avenue, surpassing any other which New York had seen. No other person in America had ever been so welcomed. The million or more who shouted and cheered and waved, were proud of him because of his great reception in Europe, but they admired him still more for his imperishable work at home, and loved him most of all, because they knew him as their friend and fellow, Theodore Roosevelt, their ideal American. A group of Rough Riders and two regiments of Spanish War Veterans formed his im-

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mediate escort, than whom none could have pleased him better.

His head was not turned, but his heart must have overflowed with gratitude.

Later, when the crowds had dispersed, he went into a bookstore, and some one in the street having recognized him, the word passed, and a great crowd cheered him as he came out. Telling his sister of the occurrence, he said, "And they soon will be throwing rotten apples at me!"

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CHAPTER XXI

WHICH WAS THE REPUBLICAN PARTY?

DID those words of Roosevelt spring from his sense of humor — humor which recognizes the topsy-turvy of life and its swift changes, and still laughs — or from the instinct which knows that even in the sweetest of all experiences there must be a drop of bitterness? Whatever their cause, they proved to be a true foreboding. He had not been home twenty-four hours before he perceived, on talking with his friends, that the Republican Party during his absence had drifted far from the course he had charted. "His policies" had vanished with his control, and the men who now managed the Administration and the party regarded him, not merely with suspicion, but with aversion.

To tell the story of this conflict is the disagreeable duty of the historian of that period, especially if he have friends and acquaintances on both sides of the feud. There are some facts not yet known; there are others which must be touched upon very delicately if at all; and, in the main, so much of the episode grew out of personal likes and dislikes that it is hard to base one's account of it on documents. In trying

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to get at the truth, I have been puzzled by the point-blank contradictions of antagonistic witnesses, whose veracity has not been questioned. Equally perplexing are the lapses of memory in cases where I happen to have seen letters or documents written at the time and giving real facts. The country would assuredly have been alarmed if it had suspected that, during the years from 1909 to 1912, the statesmen who had charge of it were as liable to attacks of amnesia as they proved to be later.

The head and front of the quarrel which wrecked the Republican Party must be sought in Roosevelt's thoroughly patriotic desire to have a successor who should carry on the principles which he had fought for and had embodied in national laws during the nearly eight years of his Presidency. He felt more passionately than anybody else the need of continuing the work he had begun, not because it was his work, but because on it alone, as he thought, the reconciliation between Capital and Labor in the United States could be brought about, and the impending war of classes could be prevented. So he chose Judge Taft as the person who, he believed, would follow his lead in this undertaking. But the experience of a hundred and ten years, since Washington was succeeded by John Adams, might have taught him that no President can quite reproduce

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the qualities of his predecessor and that the establishment of a Presidential dynasty is not congenial to the spirit of the American people. Jefferson did, indeed, hand on his mantle to Madison, and the experiment partially succeeded. But Madison was much nearer Jefferson in ability and influence than Judge Taft was near Roosevelt.

During the campaign of 1908, and immediately after the election, we can imagine that Mr. Taft was sincerely open to Roosevelt's suggestions, and that he quite naturally gave Roosevelt the impression that he intended to follow them, not because they were Roosevelt's, but because they were his own also. As soon as he began to realize that he was President, and that a President has a right to speak and act on his own motion, Mr. Taft saw other views rising within him, other preferences, other resolves. From the bosom of his family he may have heard the exhortation, "Be your own President; don't be anybody's man or rubber stamp." No doubt intimate friends strengthened this advice. The desire to be free and independent, which lies at the bottom of every normal heart, took possession of him also; further, was it not the strict duty of a President to give the country the benefit of his best judgment instead of following the rules laid down by another, or to parrot another's doctrines?

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Whatever may have been the process by which the change came, it had come before Taft's inauguration. He chose a new Cabinet, although Roosevelt supposed that several of the members of his Cabinet would be retained. Before the Colonel started for Africa he felt that a change had come, but he went away with the hope that things would turn out better than he feared. His long absence under the Equator would relieve any anxiety Taft might have as to Roosevelt's intention to dictate or interfere.

Very little political news reached the Colonel while he was hunting. On reaching Italy, on his return journey, he met Mr. Gifford Pinchot, who had come post-haste from New York, and conveyed to him the latest account of the political situation at home. It was clear that the Republican Party had split into two factions — the Regulars, who regarded President Taft as their standard-bearer, and the Insurgents, who rallied round Roosevelt, and longed desperately for his return. To the enemies of the Administration, it seemed that Mr. Taft had turned away from the Rooseveltian policies. In his appointments he had replaced Roosevelt men by Regulars. His Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Ballinger, came into conflict with Mr. Pinchot over conservation, and the public assumed that the President was not only unconcerned to uphold conservation, but was willing that

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the natural resources of the Nation should fall again into the hands of greedy private corporations. This assumption proved to be false, and Secretary Ballinger was exonerated by a public investigation; but for two years, at least, the cloud hung over Mr. Taft's reputation, and, as always happens, the correction being far less nimble than the accusation, took a much longer time in remedying the harm that it had done.

When, therefore, Roosevelt landed at the Battery on June 18, 1910, the day of his apotheosis, he knew that a factional fight was raging in the Republican Party. His trusty followers, and every one who bore a grudge against the Administration, urged him to unfurl his flag and check any further disintegration; but prudence controlled him and he announced that he should not speak on political matters for at least two months. He was sincere; but a few days later at the Harvard Commencement exercises he met Governor Hughes, of New York State, who was waging a fierce struggle against the Machine to put through a bill on primary elections. The Governor begged the Colonel as a patriotic boss-hating citizen, to help him, and Roosevelt hastily wrote and dispatched to Albany a telegram urging Republicans to support Hughes. In the result, his advice was not heeded, a straw which indicated that the Machine no longer feared to disregard him.

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For several weeks Roosevelt waited and watched, and found out by personal investigation how the Republican Party stood. It took little inspection to show him that the Taft Administration was not carrying out his policies, and that the elements against which he had striven for eight years were creeping back. Indeed, they had crept back. It would be unjust to Mr. Taft to assert that he had not continued the war on Trusts. Under his able Attorney-General, Mr. George W. Wickersham, many prosecutions were going forward, and in some cases the legislation begun by Roosevelt was extended and made more effective. I speak now as to the general course of Mr. Taft's Administration and not specially of the events of 1910. In spite of this continuation of the battle with the Octopus — as the Big Interests, Wall Street, and Trusts were indiscriminately nicknamed — the public did not believe that Mr. Taft and his assistants pushed the fight with their whole heart. Perhaps they were misjudged. Mr. Taft being in no sense a spectacular person, whatever he did would lack the spectacular quality which radiated from all Roosevelt's actions. Then, too, the pioneer has deservedly a unique reward. Just as none of the navigators who followed Columbus on the voyage to the Western Continent could win credit like his, so the prestige which Roose-

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velt gained from being the first to grapple with the great monopolies could not be shared by any successor of his, who simply carried on the work of "trust-busting," as it was called, which had become commonplace.

Nevertheless, although nobody doubted Mr. Wickersham's legal ability, the country felt that during the Taft Administration zeal had gone out of the campaign of the Administration against the Interests. Roosevelt had plunged into the fray with the enthusiasm of a Crusader. Taft followed him from afar, but without feeling the Crusader's consecration or his terrible sincerity. And during the first six months of his Administration, President Taft had unwittingly given the country the measure of himself.

The Republican platform adopted at Chicago declared "unequivocally for a revision of the tariff by a special session of Congress, immediately following the inauguration of the next President. . . . In all tariff legislation the true principle of protection is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, together with a reasonable profit to American industries. We favor the establishment of maximum and minimum rates to be administered by the President under limitations

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fixed in the law, the maximum to be available to meet discriminations by foreign countries against American goods entering their markets, and the minimum to represent the normal measure of protection at home." The American public, regardless of party, assumed that the "revision" referred to in this plank of the Republican platform meant a revision downward; and it supposed, from sayings and opinions of Mr. Taft, that he put the same construction upon it. He at once called a special session of Congress, and a new tariff bill was framed under the direction of Sereno E. Payne, a Stand-Pat Republican member of Congress, Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, and Nelson W. Aldrich, Senator from Rhode Island, and guardian angel and factotum for the Big Interests. For several months these gentlemen conducted the preparation of the new bill. Payne had already had experience in putting through the McKinley Tariff in 1890, and the Dingley Tariff in 1897. Again the committee-room was packed by greedy protectionists who, for a consideration, got from the Government whatever profit they paid for. Neither Payne nor Aldrich had the slightest idea that to fix tariff rates to enrich special individuals and firms was a most corrupt practice. When a Republican Senator, who honestly supposed that the revision would be downward, pri-

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vately remonstrated, the reply he heard was, "Where shall we get our campaign funds?" Finally, after some discussion between the House and the Senate — a discussion which did not lessen the enormities of the measure — the Payne-Aldrich Bill was passed by Congress and signed by President Taft, and it enjoyed the bad eminence of being worse than the McKinley and the Dingley tariffs which had preceded it.

The public, which had seen more clearly than on former occasions, how such charters to legalize industrial piracy were devised, was somewhat dashed by President Taft's approval. Perhaps it still hoped that the creation of a non-partisan Tariff Commission of experts would put an end to this indecent purchase and sale of privileges and would establish rates after the scientific investigation of each case. Soon, however, these hopes were swept away; for on September 17, 1909, the President delivered at Winona, Minnesota, a laudatory speech on the new tariff. He admitted that some points in Schedule K — that comprising wool and woolen goods — were too high. But, he said solemnly that this was "the best tariff law the Republicans ever made, and, therefore, the best the country ever had." In that Winona speech, Mr. Taft hung a millstone round his own neck. His critics and his friends alike had

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thrust upon them this dilemma: either he knew that the Payne-Aldrich Tariff had been arrived at by corrupt ways and was not a revision downward — in spite of which he pronounced it the "best ever"; or he did not know its nature and the means used in framing it. In the latter case, he could not be considered a person sufficiently informed on great financial questions, or on the practices of some of the politicians who made laws for him to sign, to be qualified to sit in the President's chair. If, on the other hand, knowing the measure to be bad he declared it the "best ever," he was neither sincere nor honest, and in this case also he was not a President whom the country could respect.

I would not imply that the American public went through this process of reasoning at once, or arrived at such clear-cut conclusions; Demos seldom indulges in the luxury of logic; but the shock caused by the Winona speech vibrated through the country and never after that did the public fully trust Mr. Taft. It knew that the Interests had crawled back and dictated the Payne-Aldrich Tariff, and it surmised that, although he prosecuted the Trusts diligently, they did not feel greatly terrified. But nobody whispered or suspected that he was not honest.

While President Taft slowly lost his hold on the American people, he gained proportionately with the

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Republican Machine. That Machine was composed of the Regulars of the party, or the Conservatives, as they preferred to be called, and it was losing its hold on the country. There comes a time in every sect, party, or institution when it stops growing, its arteries harden, its young men see no visions, its old men dream no dreams; it lives in the past and desperately tries to perpetuate the past. In politics when this process of petrifaction is reached, we call it Bourbonism, and the sure sign of the Bourbon is that, being unconscious that he is the victim of sclerosis, he sees no reason for seeking a cure. Unable to adjust himself to change and new conditions he falls back into the past, as an old man drops into his worn-out armchair.

Now Roosevelt had been, of course, the negation of Bourbonism. He had led the Republican Party into new fields and set it to do new work, and far off, shining clearly, its goal beckoned it on. His followers were mostly young men; they saw that the world had changed, and would change still further, and they went forward valiantly to meet it and, if possible, to shape its changes. For ten years past, these Radicals, as the Regulars named them somewhat reproachfully, and who were better defined as "Insurgents," had played an increasingly important part in Congress. They would not submit to the

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Bosses and the Machine, but voted independently, and, although they were not all of them avowed Rooseveltians, they all were going in his direction. In the second year of Mr. Taft's Administration, they rebelled against the rigid dictatorship of Joseph G. Cannon, the Speaker of the House. "Uncle Joe," as the public nicknamed him, dated from before the Civil War, and entered Congress in 1863, forty-seven years before 1910. It was as if a rigid Bourbon, who had served under Louis XV in France in 1763, had been chief law-maker under Napoleon I in 1810. Mr. Cannon, however, had never learned that the Civil War was over, whereas every Frenchman who survived the Revolution knew that it had taken place. So the Insurgents rose up against him, in his old age, deprived him of his dictatorial power, and, at the next election, Democrats and Republicans combined to sweep him out of office altogether.

The Jews who ridiculed Noah when he began to build the Ark were, it proved, Bourbons, but they had some excuse, for when Noah was working there was no portent of a flood and not even a black cloud with a shower wrapped up in it hung on the horizon. But the Republican Regulars, under Mr. Taft, could not complain that no sign had been vouchsafed to them. The amazing rise in power and popularity of

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Roosevelt during the decade, the surging unrest of Labor throughout the world, the obviously altered conditions which immense fortunes and the amassing of wealth by a few corporations had produced, and such special symptoms as the chafing at the Payne-Aldrich Tariff, the defeat of Speaker Cannon, and the election of a Democratic House of Representatives ought to have warned even the dullest Republican. For good, or for ill, a social and industrial revolution was under way, and, instead of trimming their sails to meet it, they had not even taken ship.

Roosevelt and the Insurgents had long understood the revolution of which they were a part, and had taken measures to control it. Roosevelt's first achievement, as we have seen, was to bring the Big Interests under the power of the law. The hawks and vultures whose wings he clipped naturally did not like it or him, but the laws had force behind them, and they submitted. The leaders of the popular movement, however, declared that this was not enough. They preached the right of the people to rule. The people, they urged, must have a real share in electing the men who were to make the laws and to administer and interpret them.

Every one knew that the system of party government resulted in a Machine, consisting of a few men who controlled the preliminary steps which led to

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the nomination of candidates and then decided the election, so far as their control of the regular party members could do this. It would be idle, said the advocates of these popular rights, to make the best of laws in behalf of the people and allow them to be enforced by representatives and judges chosen, under whatever disguise, by the great capitalists. And so these Progressives, bent on trusting implicitly the intelligence, the unselfishness, and the honesty of the People, proposed three novel political instruments for obtaining the pure Democracy they dreamed of. First, the Initiative, by which a certain number of voters could suggest new laws; second, the Referendum, by which a vote should be taken to decide whether the People approved or not of a law that was in operation; and third, the Judicial Recall, by which a majority of the voters could nullify a decision handed down by a judge. This last was often misnamed and misconstrued, the "Recall of Judges," but so far as I know very few of the Progressive leaders, certainly not Colonel Roosevelt, proposed to put the tenure of office of a judge at the mercy of a sudden popular vote.

When Roosevelt returned from Africa, he found that the Progressive movement had developed rapidly, and the more he thought over its principles, the more they appealed to him. To arrive at Social

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Justice was his life-long endeavor. In a speech delivered on August 31, 1910, at Ossawatomie, Kansas, he discoursed on the "New Nationalism." As if to push back hostile criticism at the start, he quoted Abraham Lincoln: "Labor is prior to, and independent of capital; capital is only the fruit of labor and could never have existed but for labor. Labor is the superior of capital and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights which are as worthy of protection as any other rights. . . . Nor should this lead to a war upon the owners of property. Property is the fruit of labor; property is desirable; it is a positive good in the world. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him work diligently and build one for himself, thus, by example, showing that his own shall be safe from violence when built."

Not all those who cry "Plato! Plato!" are Platonists. So, not all those who now appeal to Lincoln's mighty name for sanction of their own petty caprices and crazy creeds, have learned the first letter of the alphabet which Lincoln used; but Roosevelt, I believe, knew Lincoln better, knew the spirit of Lincoln better, than any other President has known it. And Lincoln would have approved of most, if not of all, of the measures which, in that Ossawatomie speech, Roosevelt declared must be adopted. When-

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ever he spoke or wrote after that, he repeated his arguments in defense of the "New Nationalism," and they sank deep into the public conscience.

He took no active part in politics, as he thought, but the country knew better than he did that, wherever he was, politics was active. Every one consulted him; his occasional speeches roused a storm of criticism; a dozen would-be candidates in each party sat on the anxious seat and waited for his decision. So he watched the year 1910 draw to its close and 1911 wheel by, without his giving the final word. Although he was very really the centre of attention, he nevertheless felt lonely, and a friend tells me of going to Oyster Bay, late in the autumn, and finding Roosevelt in fact alone, as his family were away, and depressed by the thought that he was cut off, probably forever, from throwing himself into work which would be of public benefit. But Roosevelt was a fighter, not a sulker, and he was too healthy in spirit to give way to disappointment.

That he resented the purpose, as he supposed, of the Taft Administration to throw over his policies, I do not doubt, although there are letters in existence which indicate that he still had courteous if not friendly relations with President Taft. But what ate into him more than any personal resentment was his chagrin at seeing the Great Cause, for which he

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had spent his life, neglected and denied by the Republican Party. Progressivism seemed to be slowly in process of suffocation by the Big Interests which it had come into being to protest against, to curb, and to control.

There were other leaders in this Cause, the most prominent being Senator La Follette, of Wisconsin. He had caught up very early some of Bryan's demagogic doctrines, which he had softened a good deal and made palatable to the Republicans of his State. Then he had stood out as a Liberal in Congress, and from Liberal he became Insurgent, and now that the Insurgents were being defined as Progressives, he led the Progressives in Congress. The same spirit was permeating the Democrats; only the hide-bound Regular Republicans appeared not to notice that a new day had dawned. "Uncle Joe" Cannon, their Speaker of the House, reveled in his Bourbonism, made it as obnoxious as he could, and then was swept away by the enraged Liberals.

By the summer of 1911 the discussion of possible candidates grew more heated. Roosevelt still kept silent, but he told his intimates that he would not run. He did not wish to be President again, especially at the cost of an internecine struggle. I believe that he was sincere; so is the consummate actor or the prima donna, whom the world applauds, sincere in

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bidding farewell to the stage forever. Nevertheless, which of them is conscious of the strength of the passion, which long habit, and supremacy, and the intoxication of success have evoked, dwells in them? Given the moment and the lure, they forget their promise of farewell.

By this time the politicians began to foresee that the dissension in the Republican Party would make it difficult to choose a candidate who could win. Every President desires to be reëlected if he can be, not necessarily because he is greedy of power, but because reëlection is equivalent to public approval of his first term. Mr. Taft, therefore, stood out as the logical candidate of the Conservatives. The great majority of the Progressives desired Roosevelt, but, since he would say neither yes nor no, they naturally turned to Senator La Follette. And La Follette launched a vigorous campaign for the nomination and was undoubtedly gaining ground except in the East, where some of his views had been regarded as too extreme even for the Liberals. To his great misfortune, in a speech at Philadelphia on February 2, 1912, he showed signs of a temporary mental collapse and, although his friends protested that this mishap was not serious, much less permanent, he never got back into the running.

Meanwhile, Roosevelt's nearest zealots not only

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urged upon him the duty of coming out squarely as the Progressive aspirant, but they set up throughout the country their propaganda for him. He received letters by the bushel and every letter appealed to his patriotism and to his sense of duty. The Progressives were in dead earnest. They believed that the country, if not civilization, had reached a crisis on the outcome of which would depend the future health and peace of Society. They had a crusade, not a mere political campaign, ahead of them, and they could not believe that Roosevelt, their peerless champion, would fail them.

The average person, who calmly sits back in his easy-chair and passes his verdict on the acts of great men, does not always allow for the play of emotions which may have influenced them. What sort of reaction must appeals like these have stimulated? How can the unimaginative man, who has never been urged by his fellow townspeople to be even Trustee of the Town library or graveyard, put himself in the place of a Leader, who is told by millions of persons, possibly fanatics but not flatterers, that the destiny of the Nation depends upon his listening to their entreaties?

Everything conspired to win Roosevelt over: La Follette being eliminated, there was no other Progressive whom the majority would agree upon. The

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party spoke with only one voice, and uttered only one name. And, presently, the Governors of seven States — Bass of New Hampshire, Hadley of Missouri, Osborn of Michigan, Glasscock of West Virginia, Carey of Wyoming, Aldrich of Nebraska, and Stubbs of Kansas — issued an appeal to him which seemed to give an official stamp to the popular entreaties. Roosevelt's enemies insinuated that the seven Governors had been moved to act at his own instigation, and they tried to belittle the entire movement as a "frame-up," in the common phrase of the day. No doubt he was consulted in the general direction of the campaign; no doubt, being a very alert student of political effects, he suggested many things; but the rush of enthusiasts to him was genuine and spontaneous.

I happened to spend the evening of February 25, 1912, with him at the house of Judge Robert Grant in Boston. Judge Grant and I were not politicians, and I, at least, had never voted for a Republican Presidential candidate. But both of us were very old personal friends of the Colonel, and for five hours we three talked with the utmost frankness. He knew that he could trust us, and, I think, he planned to get the views of non-partisan friends before announcing his final decision. Three days earlier, at Columbus, Ohio, he gave a great speech, in which

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he proclaimed a new charter for Democracy and vigorously advocated the Initiative, Referendum, and Recall. We discussed these from every side; he got the *Outlook* in which his speech was printed and read to us passages which he thought corrected popular misunderstanding of it. When I objected to the platform in general, because it would tend to destroy representative government and substitute therefor the whims of the populace at the moment, he replied that we had no representative government. "I can name forty-six Senators," he said, "who secured their seats and hold them by the favor of a Wall Street magnate and his associates, in all parts of the country. Do you call that popular, representative government?" he asked.

The evening wore on, and in similar fashion he parried all our criticism. We urged him not to be a candidate, because, we said, we thought that the public ought to be reined in and disciplined, instead of being encouraged to be more lawless and self-willed. I defended our judiciary system and said that the American people needed most of all to be taught respect for the Courts. He explained that his Recall of Judicial Decisions did not mean, as the Opposition alleged, the Recall of Judges. Then we urged him, for the sake of his own future, not to engage in a factional strife which might end his use-

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fulness to the country, but he brushed aside every argument based on his selfish advantage. "I wish," he said to me, "to draw into one dominant stream all the intelligent and patriotic elements, in order to prepare against the social upheaval which will otherwise overwhelm us." "A great Central Party, such as Cavour founded for the liberation of Italy?" said I. "Exactly," said he.

The thing which mainly struck me at the time, and which I still vividly remember, was the Colonel's composure throughout all this debate. Vehement he was — because he could not describe even a butterfly without vividness which easily passed into vehemence — but he was in no sense mentally overwrought; nor did he continually return to one subject like a man with an obsession. His humor flashed out, even at his own expense, but he had throughout the underlying gravity of one who knows that he is about to make a very important decision. I mention these facts because at the time, and afterward, Roosevelt's enemies circulated the assertion that his mind was unbalanced, and that this fact accounted for his break with the regular Republicans. I have in my hand a printed circular, issued by a Chicago lawyer, offering five thousand dollars apiece to each of several hospitals and other charitable institutions, if Roosevelt would allow himself to be

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examined by competent alienists and they did not pronounce him to be a "madman"! No! he was not mad, but he had the fervor, the courage, the impatience of a Crusader about to undergo ordeal by battle.

From notes of the conversation Judge Grant made at the time I quote the following. Judge Grant asked:

"Will any of the party leaders support you?"

"No," he said, "none of them; not even Lodge, I think. I don't see how he can. My support will come from the people, officered by a few lieutenants — young men principally like Governor Bass, of New Hampshire." He said that he realized that the probabilities were all against his nomination; that a President in office had all the machinery on his side; but that of course it wouldn't do to admit outside that he expected to lose; that if he could reach the popular vote through direct primaries, he could hope to win. It was manifest that he believed that it was indispensable for the future good of the Republican Party that he should make the breach. When he said as much, I asked, "But the situation is complex, I suppose? You would like to be President?" "You are right," he replied. "It is complex. I like power; but I care nothing to be President as President. I am interested in these ideas of mine and I want to carry them through, and feel that I am the one to carry them through." He said that he believed the most important questions today were the humanitarian and economic problems, and intimated that the will of the people had been thwarted in these ways, especially by the courts on constitutional grounds, and that reforms were urgent.

As I went out into the midnight, I felt sad, as one might after bidding farewell to a friend who has volunteered to lead a forlorn hope. I did not realize

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then the moral depth from which Roosevelt's resolve came, or that he would rather die for that cause than be victorious in any other.

The next day, Monday, February 26th, he announced to the country that he was a candidate for the Republican nomination.

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CHAPTER XXII

THE TWO CONVENTIONS

DURING the weeks while Roosevelt had been deliberating over "throwing his hat into the ring," his opponents had been busily gathering delegates. By this delay they gained a strategic advantage. According to the unholy custom which gave to the Republicans in the Southern States a quota of delegates proportioned to the population and not to the number of Republican voters, a large Southern delegation was pledged for Mr. Taft very early. Most of the few Southern Republicans were either office-holders or negroes; the former naturally supported the Administration on which their living depended; the latter, whose votes were not counted, also supported the President from whom alone they might expect favors. The former slave States elected 216 delegates, nearly all of whom went to President Taft, making a very good start for him. In the Northern, Western, and Pacific States, however, Roosevelt secured a large proportion of the delegates. In the system of direct primaries, by which the people indicated their preference instead of having the candidates chosen in the State Conventions,

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which were controlled by the Machine, the Progressives came out far ahead. Thus, in North Dakota, President Taft had less than 4000 votes out of 48,000 cast, the rest going to Roosevelt and La Follette. In several of the great States he carried everything before him. In Illinois, his majority was 139,000 over Taft's; in Pennsylvania, 67 of the 76 delegates went to him. In Ohio, the President's own State, the Taft forces were "snowed under"; in California, a stronghold of Progressivism, Roosevelt had a large plurality. Nevertheless, wherever the Regulars controlled the voting, they usually brought President Taft to the front. Even when they could not produce the votes, they managed to send out contesting delegations.

On looking back, it appears indisputable that if the Republicans could then have cast their ballots they would have been overwhelmingly for Roosevelt; and if the Roosevelt delegates to the Convention had not been hampered in voting, they too would have nominated him. But the elections had been so artfully manipulated that, when the Convention met, there were 220 contests. Everybody understood that the final result hung on the way in which these should be decided.

The Convention assembled in the great Coliseum Hall at Chicago on June 18, 1912. But for ten days

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the hosts had been coming in, one delegation after another; the hotels were packed; each committee had its special quarters; crowds of sight-seers, shouters, and supporters swelled the multitude. The Republican National Committee met; the managers of each candidate met. The committees, which had not yet an official standing, conferred unofficially. Rumors floated from every room; there were secret conferences, attempts to win over delegates, promises to trade votes, and even efforts at conciliation. Night and day this wild torrent of excitement rushed on.

A spectator from Mars might have remarked: "But for so important a business as the choice of a candidate who may become President of the United States, you ought to have quiet, deliberation, free play, not for those who can shout loudest, but for those who can speak wisest." And to this remark, the howling and whirling dervishes who attended the Convention would have replied, if they had waited long enough to hear it through, by yelling,

> "Hail! Hail! the gang's all here!
> What the hell do we care?
> What the hell do we care?"

and would have darted off to catch up with their fellow Bacchanals. A smell of cocktails and of whiskey was ubiquitous; a dense pall of tobacco smoke per-

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vaded the committee-rooms; and out of doors the clang of brass bands drowned even the incessant noise of the throngs. There was no night, for the myriads of electric lights made shadows but no darkness, and you wondered when these strange creatures slept.

Such Saturnalia did not begin with the Convention of 1912. Most of those who took part in them hardly thought it a paradox that these should be the conditions under which the Americans nominated their candidates for President.

Roosevelt had not intended to appear at the Convention, but when he discovered that the long-distance telephone from Chicago to Oyster Bay, by which his managers conferred with him, was being tapped, he changed his mind. He perceived, also, that there was a lack of vigorous leadership among those managers which demanded his presence. By going, he would call down much adverse criticism, even from some of those persons whose support he needed. On the other hand, he would immensely strengthen his cause in Chicago, where the mere sight of him would stimulate enthusiasm.

So he and Mrs. Roosevelt took the five-thirty afternoon train to Chicago, on Friday, June 14th, leaving as privately as possible, and accompanied by seven or eight of their children and cousins. Late

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on Saturday, the train, having narrowly escaped being wrecked by an accident, reached Chicago. At the station there was an enormous crowd. Roosevelt's young kinsmen kept very close to him and wedged their way to an automobile. With the greatest difficulty his car slowly proceeded to the Congress Hotel. Never was there such a furor of welcome. Everybody wore a Roosevelt button. Everybody cheered for "Teddy." Here and there they passed State delegations bearing banners and mottoes. Rough Riders, who had come in their well-worn uniforms, added to the Rooseveltian exultation. Whoever judged by this demonstration must think it impossible that the Colonel could be defeated.

After he and his party had been shown to the suites reserved for them, he went out on the balcony of a second-floor room and spoke a few words to the immense multitude waiting below. He said, in substance, that he was glad to find from their cheers that Chicago did not believe in the thieves who stole delegates. Some who saw him say that his face was red with anger; others aver that he was no more vehement than usual, and simply strained himself to the utmost to make his voice carry throughout his audience. Still, if he said what they report, he was not politic.

Then followed days and nights of incessant strain.

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The Colonel and Mrs. Roosevelt had their personal apartment in the northeast corner of the hotel, at some distance from the Florentine Room, which served as the official headquarters for the Progressives. He had, besides, a private office with a reception-room, and Tyree, one of the devoted detectives who had served under him in old times, carefully guarded the entrance. There was hardly a moment when one or two persons were not closeted with him. Occasionally, he would come out into the reception-room and speak to the throng waiting there. No matter what the news, no matter how early or late the hour, he was always cheerful, and the mere sight of him brought joy and confidence to his followers.

The young kinsmen went everywhere and brought back reports of what they had seen or heard. One of them kept a diary of the events as they whirled past, hour by hour, and in this one can note many of the fleeting but vivid touches, which recall to the reader now the reality of those feverish days. He attended a big Taft rally at the Taft headquarters. Bell-boys ran up and down the hotel corridors announcing it. "After each announcement," writes the young cousin, "a group of Roosevelt men would cry out, 'All postmasters attend!'" Two Taftites spoke briefly and "were greeted by a couple of hand-claps apiece; and then the star performer of the

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evening was announced in the most glowing terms as a model of political propriety, and the foremost and most upright citizen of the United States — William Barnes, Jr., of Albany." Mr. Barnes was supposed, at that time, to lead the New York Republican Machine. "We have got to save the country," he said, "save the constitution, save our liberty. We are in danger of monarchy. The country must be saved!!" The Roosevelt cousin thought that he spoke "without fervor to a listless, sedate, and very polite audience. It was made all the more preposterous by the fact that a very ancient colored gentleman stood back of Barnes, and whenever Barnes paused, would point to the crowd and feebly begin clapping his hands. They would then slowly and very politely take up the applause, in every case waiting for his signal. It was almost pathetic."

At one time the Roosevelt scouts alleged that "Timothy Woodruff is wavering, with four other delegates, and will soon fall to us," and told "of delegates flopping over, here and there." A still more extraordinary piece of news came from Hooker to the effect that he had in some way intercepted a telegram "from Murray Crane to his nephew saying that Crane and Barnes would 'fight or ruin' and that it was now 'use any means and sacrifice the Republican Party.' Had it not been for the way he

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told us, I could n't have believed such a thing possible."

Rumors like these were not verified at the time, and they are assuredly unverifiable now. I repeat them merely to show how suspense and excitement were constantly fed before the Convention met. Remembering how long ex-Senator Crane and Mr. Barnes had had their hands on the throttle of the Republican Machine, we are not surprised at the young Rooseveltian's statement: "The Taft forces control anything that has to do with machinery, but all the feeling is for Roosevelt, and the Congress Hotel, at any rate, favors the 'Big Noise,' as you will sometimes hear him called in the lobbies or in the streets." Apparently, stump speeches were made at any moment, and without provocation, in any hall, room, or lobby of the hotel, by any one who felt the spirit move him; and, lest silence should settle down and soothe the jaded nerves, a band would strike up unexpectedly. The marching to and fro of unrestrained gangs, shouting, "We-want-Teddy!" completed the pandemonium.

Monday came. The young scouts were as busy as ever in following the trails which led to Taft activities. The news they had to tell was always very cheering. They found little enthusiasm among the President's supporters. They heard, from the most

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trustworthy sources, that this or that Taft leader or delegation was coming over. And, in truth, the Taft body probably did not let off a tenth of the noise which their opponents indulged in. The shallows murmur, but the deeps are dumb, does not exactly apply to the two opposing hosts. The Taft men resorted very little to shouting, because they knew that if they were to win at all it must be by other means. The Rooseveltians, on the other hand, really felt a compelling surge of enthusiasm which they must uncork.

Meanwhile Colonel Roosevelt and his lieutenants knew that the enemy was perfecting his plan to defeat them. On Monday evening his zealots packed the Auditorium and he poured himself out to them in one of his torrential speeches calculated to rouse the passions rather than the minds of his hearers. But it fitly symbolized the situation. He, the dauntless leader, stood there, the soul of sincerity and courage, impressing upon them all that they were engaged in a most solemn cause and defying the opposition as if it were a legion of evil spirits. His closing words — "We stand at Armageddon and we battle for the Lord" — summed it all up so completely that the audience burst into a roar of approval, and never doubted that he spoke the truth.

Tuesday at noon, a crowd of fifteen thousand per-

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sons, delegates and visitors, packed the vast Convention Hall of the Coliseum. Mr. Victor Rosewater, of Nebraska, presided at the opening. As it was known that the Republican National Committee intended to place on the temporary roll of delegates seventy-two names of persons whose seats were contested, Governor Hadley, of Missouri, made a motion that only those delegates, whose right was not contested, should sit and vote during the preliminary proceedings. Had he been successful, the Regulars would have lost the battle from the beginning. But he was ruled out of order on the ground that the only business before the Convention was the election of a Temporary Chairman. This took place, and Senator Root, from New York, was elected by 558 votes; McGovern, the Roosevelt candidate, received 501 votes; there were 14 scattering, and 5 persons did not vote. Senator Root, therefore, won his election by 38 votes over the combined opposition, but his plurality was secured by the votes of the 72 whose seats were contested.

During the three following days the Roosevelt men fought desperately to secure what they believed to be justice. They challenged every delegate, they demanded a roll-call on the slightest excuse, they deluged the Regulars with alternate showers of sarcasm and anger. But it availed them nothing. They

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soon perceived that victory lay with the Republican National Committee, which had the organization of the Convention and the framing of the rules of procedure. The Taft people, the Regulars, controlled the National Committee, and they knew that the rules would do the rest, especially since the Chairman of the Convention, Senator Root, was the interpreter of the rules.

At no other National Convention in American history did a Chairman keep his head and his temper so admirably as did Mr. Root on this occasion. His intellect, burning with a cold, white light, illumined every point, but betrayed no heat of passion. He applied the rules as impartially as if they were theorems of algebra. Time after time the Rooseveltians protested against the holders of contested seats to vote, but he was unmoved because the rule prescribed that the person had a right to vote. When the contests were taken up, the Taft men always won, the Roosevelt men always lost. The Machine went as if by clock-work or like the guillotine. More than once some Rooseveltian leader, like Governor Hadley, stung by a particularly shocking display of overbearing injustice, taunted the majority with shouts of "Robbers" and "Theft." Roars of passion swept through the hall. The derision of the minority was countered by the majority with equal vigor, but the

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majority did not always feel, in spite of its truculent manner, confident of the outcome.

By what now seems shameless theft, the Credentials Committee approved the seating of two Taft delegates from California, in spite of the fact that the proper officials of that State had certified that its twenty-six delegates were all for Roosevelt, and had been elected by a majority of 76,000 votes. Chairman Root put the question to the Convention, however, and those two discredited delegates were admitted for Taft by a vote of 542 to 529. This indicates how close the Convention then stood, when a change of seven votes would have given Roosevelt a majority of one and have added to his list the two California delegates who were counted out. Had such a change taken place, those who watched the Convention believed there would have been a "landslide" to Roosevelt. But the Republican Committee's sorely tested rules held. After that, the Rooseveltians saw no gleam of hope.

On Saturday, June 22d, the list of delegates to the Convention having been drawn up as the Republican Machine intended, Mr. Taft was nominated by a vote of 561; Roosevelt received 107, La Follette 41, Cummins 17, Hughes 2; 344 delegates did not vote. The last were all Roosevelt men, but they had been requested by Roosevelt to refuse to vote.

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Through Mr. Henry J. Allen, of Kansas, he sent this message:

The Convention has now declined to purge the roll of the fraudulent delegates placed thereon by the defunct National Committee, and the majority which thus endorsed fraud was made a majority only because it included the fraudulent delegates themselves, who all sat as judges on one another's cases. If these fraudulent votes had not thus been cast and counted the Convention would have been purged of their presence. This action makes the Convention in no proper sense any longer a Republican Convention representing the real Republican Party. Therefore, I hope the men elected as Roosevelt delegates will now decline to vote on any matter before the Convention. I do not release any delegate from his honorable obligation to vote for me if he votes at all, but under the actual conditions I hope that he will not vote at all.

The Convention as now composed has no claim to represent the voters of the Republican Party. It represents nothing but successful fraud in overriding the will of the rank and file of the party. Any man nominated by the Convention as now constituted would be merely the beneficiary of this successful fraud; it would be deeply discreditable to any man to accept the Convention's nomination under these circumstances; and any man thus accepting it would have no claim to the support of any Republican on party grounds, and would have forfeited the right to ask the support of any honest man of any party on moral grounds.

Mr. Allen concluded with these words of his own:

We do not bolt. We merely insist that you, not we, are making the record. And we refuse to be bound by it. We have pleaded with you ten days. We have fought with you five days for a square deal. We fight no more, we plead no longer. We shall sit in protest and the people who sent us here shall judge us.

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Gentlemen, you accuse us of being radical. Let me tell you that no radical in the ranks of radicalism ever did so radical a thing as to come to a National Convention of the great Republican Party and secure through fraud the nomination of a man whom they knew could not be elected.[1]

Every night during that momentous week the Roosevelt delegates met in the Congress Hotel, talked over the day's proceedings, gave vent to their indignation, confirmed each other's resolution, and took a decision as to their future action. The powerful Hiram Johnson, Governor of California, led them, and through his eloquence he persuaded all but 107 of them to stand by Roosevelt whether he were nominated by the Convention or not.

And this they did. For when the vote for the nomination was taken at the Convention only 107 of the Roosevelt men cast their ballots. They favored Roosevelt, but they were not prepared to quit the Republican Party. During the roll-call the Roosevelt delegates from Massachusetts refused to vote. Thereupon, Mr. Root, the Chairman, ruled that they must vote, to which Frederick Fosdick replied, when his name was read again, "Present, and not voting. I defy the Convention to make me vote for any man"; and seventeen other Roosevelt delegates refrained. Mr. Root then called up the alternates of these ab-

[1] *Fifteenth Republican National Convention* (New York, 1912), 333, 335.

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stainers and three of them recorded their votes for Taft, but there was such a demonstration against this ruling that Mr. Root thought better of it and proceeded in it no farther. Many of his Republican associates at the time thought this action high-handed and unjustified, and many more agree in this opinion today.

Except for this grave error, Mr. Root's rulings were strictly according to the precedents and directions of the Republican National Committee, and we may believe that even he saw the sardonic humor of his unvarying application of them at the expense of the Rooseveltians. Before the first day's session was over, the process was popularly called the "steam roller." Late in the week, a delegate rose to a point of order, and on being recognized by the Chairman, he shouted that he wished to call the attention of the Chairman to the fact that the steam roller was exceeding its speed limit, at which Mr. Root replied, "The Chairman rules that the gentleman's point of order is well taken." And everybody laughed.

There was one dramatic moment which, as Dean Lewis remarks, has had no counterpart in a National Convention. When the Machine had succeeded, in spite of protests and evidence, in stealing the two delegates from California, the friends of Mr. Taft gave triumphant cheers. Then the Roosevelt men

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rose up as one man and sent forth a mighty cheer which astonished their opponents. It was a cheer in which were mingled indignation and scorn, and, above all, relief. Strictly interpreted, it meant that those men who had sat for four days and seen their wishes thwarted, by what they regarded as fraud, and had held on in the belief that this fraud could not continue to the end, that a sense of fairness would return and rule the Regulars, now realized that Fraud would concede nothing and that their Cause was lost. And they felt a great load lifted. No obligation bound them any longer to the Republican Party which had renounced honesty in its principles and fair play in its practice. Henceforth they could go out and take any step they chose to promote their Progressive doctrines.[1]

Shortly after the Convention adjourned, having, by these methods, nominated Mr. Taft and James S. Sherman for President and Vice-President, the Roosevelteians held a great meeting in Orchestra Hall. Governor Johnson presided and apparently a majority of the Rooseveltians wished, then and there, to organize a new party and to nominate Roosevelt as its candidate. Several men made brief but earnest addresses. Then Roosevelt himself spoke, and although he lacked nothing of his usual vehemence,

[1] Lewis, 363.

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he seemed to be controlled by a sense of the solemnity of their purpose. He told them that it was no more a question of Progressivism, which he ardently believed in, but a question of fundamental honesty and right, which everybody ought to believe in and uphold. He advised them to go to their homes, to discuss the crisis with their friends; to gain what adherence and support they could, and to return in two months and formally organize their party and nominate their candidate for President. And he added: "If you wish me to make the fight, I will make it, even if only one State should support me. The only condition I impose is that you shall feel entirely free, when you come together, to substitute any other man in my place, if you deem it better for the movement, and in such case, I will give him my heartiest support."

And so the defeated majority of the Republicans at Chicago, Republicans no longer, broke up. There were many earnest hand-shakings, many pledges to meet again in August, and to take up the great work. Those who intended to stay by the Republican Party, not less than those who cast their lot with the Progressives, bade farewell, with deep emotion, to the Leader whom they had wished to see at the head of the Republican Party. Chief among these was Governor Hadley, of Missouri, who at one moment, dur-

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ing the Convention, seemed likely to be brought forward by the Regulars as a compromise candidate. Some of the Progressives resented his defection from them; not so Roosevelt, who said: "He will not be with us, but we must not blame him."

Six weeks later, the Progressives returned to Chicago. Again, Roosevelt had his headquarters at the Congress Hotel. Again, the delegates, among whom were several women, met at the Coliseum. Crowds of enthusiastic supporters and larger crowds of curiosity-seekers swarmed into the vast building. On Monday, August 5, the first session of the Progressive Party's Convention was held. Senator Albert J. Beveridge, of Indiana, made the opening address, in which he defined the principles of their party and the objects it hoped to obtain. Throughout the proceedings there was much enthusiasm, but no battle. It was rather the gathering of several thousand very earnest men and women bent on consecrating themselves to a new Cause, which they believed to be the paramount Cause for the political, economic, and social welfare of their country. Nearly all of them were Idealists, eager to secure the victory of some special reform. And, no doubt, an impartial observer might have detected among them traces of that "lunatic fringe," which Roosevelt himself had long ago humorously remarked clung to the skirts of every

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reform. But the whole body, judged without prejudice, probably contained the largest number of disinterested, public-spirited, and devoted persons, who had ever met for a national and political object since the group which formed the Republican Party in 1854.

The professional politician who usually preponderates in such Conventions, and, in the last, had usurped control both of the proceedings and decisions, had little place here. The chief topic of discussion turned on the admission of negro delegates from the South. Roosevelt believed that an attempt to create a negro Progressive Party, as such, would alienate the Southern whites and would certainly sharpen their hostility towards the blacks. Therefore, he advised that the negro delegates ought to be approved by the White Progressives in their several districts. In other words, the Progressive Party in the South should be a white party with such colored members as the whites found acceptable.

On Monday and Tuesday the work done in the Convention was much less important than that done by the Committee on Resolutions and by the Committee on Credentials. On Wednesday the Convention heard and adopted the Platform and then nominated Roosevelt by acclamation. Miss Jane Addams, of Hull House, Chicago, seconded the nomination,

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praising Roosevelt as "one of the few men in our public life who has been responsive to modern movement." "The program," she said, "will need a leader of invincible courage, of open mind, of democratic sympathies — one endowed with power to interpret the common man, and to identify himself with the common lot." Governor Hiram Johnson, from California, was nominated for Vice-President. Over the platform, to which the candidates were escorted, hung Kipling's stanza:

> "For there is neither East nor West,
> Border nor breed nor birth,
> When two strong men stand face to face,
> Though they come from the ends of the earth."

Portraits of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Jackson, and Hamilton, a sufficiently inclusive group of patriots, looked down upon them. After Roosevelt and Johnson addressed the audience, the trombones sounded "Old Hundred" and the great meeting closed to the words —

> "Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

The Progressive Platform contained many planks which have since been made laws by the Democratic Party, which read the signs of the times more quickly than did the Republicans. Especially many of the suggestions relating to Labor, the improvement of the currency, the control of corporate wealth, and

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oversight over public hygiene, should be commended. In general, it promised to bring the Government nearer to the people by giving the people a more and more direct right over the Government. It declared for a rational tariff and the creation of a non-partisan Tariff Commission of experts, and it denounced alike the Republicans for the Payne-Aldrich Bill, which dishonestly revised upwards, and the Democrats, who wished to abolish protection altogether. It urged proper military and naval preparation and the building of two battleships a year — a plank which we can imagine Roosevelt wrote in with peculiar satisfaction. It advocated direct primaries; the conservation of natural resources; woman suffrage.

So rapidly has the country progressed in seven years that most of the recommendations have already been adopted, and are among the commonplaces which nobody disputes any longer. But the Initiative, the Referendum, and the Recall of Judicial Decisions were the points, as I remarked above, over which the country debated most hotly. The Recall, in particular, created a widespread alarm, and just as Roosevelt's demand for it in his Columbus speech prevented, as I believe, his nomination by the Republican Convention in June, so it deprived the Progressives at the election in November of scores of thousands of votes. The people of the United States

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— every person who owned a bit of property, a stock or a bond, or who had ten dollars or more in the savings bank — looked upon it almost with consternation. For they knew that they were living in a time of flux, when old standards were melting away like snow images in the sun, when new ideals, untried and based on the negation of some of the oldest principles in our civilization, were being pushed forward. They instinctively rallied to uphold Law, the slow product of centuries of growth, the sheet anchor of Society in a time of change. Where could we look for solidity, or permanence, if judicial decisions could be recalled at the caprice of the mob — the hysterical, the uninstructed, the fickle mob? The opinion of one trained and honest judge outweighs the whims of ten thousand of the social dregs.

The Recall of Judicial Decisions, therefore, caused many of Roosevelt's friends, and even Republicans who would otherwise have supported him, to balk. They not only rejected the proposal itself, but they feared that he, by making it, indicated that he had lost his judgment and was being swept into the vortex of revolution. Judges and courts and respect for law, like lighthouses on granite foundations, must be kept safe from the fluctuations of tides and the crash of tempests.

The campaign which followed is chiefly remark-

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able for Roosevelt's amazing activity. He felt that the success of the Progressive Party at the polls depended upon him as its Leader. The desire for personal success in any contest into which he plunged would have been a great incentive, but this was a cause which dwarfed any personal considerations of his. Senator Joseph M. Dixon, of Montana, managed the campaign; Roosevelt himself gave it a dynamic impulse which never flagged. He went to the Pacific Coast, speaking at every important centre on the way, and returning through the Southern States to New York City. In September he swept through New England, and he was making a final tour through the Middle West, when, on October 14th, just as he was leaving his hotel to make a speech in the Auditorium in Milwaukee, a lunatic named John Schranck shot him with a revolver. The bullet entered his body about an inch below the right nipple and would probably have been fatal but for an eyeglass-case and a roll of manuscript he had in his pocket. Before the assassin could shoot again, his hand was caught and deflected by the Colonel's secretary. "Don't hurt the poor creature," Roosevelt said, when Schranck was overpowered and brought before him. Not knowing the extent of his wound, and waiting only long enough to return to his hotel room and change his white shirt, as the

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bosom of the one he had on was soaked with blood, and disregarding the entreaties of his companions to stay quiet, he went to the Auditorium and spoke for more than an hour. Only towards the end did the audience perceive that he showed signs of fatigue. This extraordinary performance was most foolhardy, and some of his carping critics said that, as usual, Roosevelt wanted to be theatrical. But there was no such purpose in him. He felt to the depths of his soul that neither his safety nor that of any other individual counted in comparison with the triumph of the Cause he was fighting for.

After a brief examination the surgeons stated that he had better be removed to the Mercy Hospital in Chicago. They put him on his special car and by an incredible negligence they sent him off to make the night journey without any surgical attendant. On reaching the Mercy Hospital, Dr. Ryan made a further examination and reported that there seemed to be no immediate danger, although he could not be sure whether the Colonel would live or not. Roosevelt, who was advertised to make a great speech in Louisville, Kentucky, that evening, summoned Senator Beveridge and sent him off with the manuscript of the address to take his place. Mrs. Roosevelt reached Chicago by the first train possible, and stayed with him while he underwent, impa-

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tiently, nearly a fortnight's convalescence. Then, much sooner than the surgeons thought wise, although his wound had healed with remarkable speed, he returned to Oyster Bay, and on October 30th he closed his campaign by addressing sixteen thousand persons in the Madison Square Garden. He spoke with unwonted calm and judicial poise; and so earnestly that the conviction which he felt carried conviction to many who heard him. "I am glad beyond measure," he said, "that I am one of the many who in this fight have stood ready to spend and be spent, pledged to fight, while life lasts, the great fight for righteousness and for brotherhood and for the welfare of mankind."

President Taft and the members of his Cabinet took little or no active part in the campaign. Indeed, the Republicans seemed unable to arouse enthusiasm. They relied upon their past victories and the robust campaign fund, which the Interests gladly furnished. The Democratic candidate was Woodrow Wilson, Governor of New Jersey, who had been professor at Princeton University, and then its president. As Governor, he had commended himself by fighting the Machine, and by advocating radical measures. As candidate, he asserted his independence by declaring that "a party platform is not a program." He spoke effectively, and both he and his party

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had the self-complacency that comes to persons who believe that they are sure to win. And how could their victory be in doubt since the united Democrats had for opponents the divided Republicans? When Colonel Roosevelt was shot, Governor Wilson magnanimously announced that he would make no more speeches. Roosevelt objected to this, believing that a chance accident to him, personally, ought not to stop any one from criticising him politically. "Whatever could with truth and propriety have been said against me and my cause before I was shot, can," he urged, "with equal truth and equal propriety, be said against me now, and it should so be said; and the things that cannot be said now are merely the things that ought not to have been said before. This is not a contest about any man; it is a contest concerning principles."

At the election on November 5th, Wilson was elected by 6,286,000 votes out of 15,310,000 votes, thus being a minority President by two million and a half votes. Roosevelt received 4,126,000 and Taft 3,483,000 votes. The combined vote of what had been the Republican Party amounted to 7,609,000 votes, or 1,323,000 more than those received by Mr. Wilson. When it came to the Electoral College, the result was even more significant. Wilson had 435, Roosevelt 88, and Taft, thanks to Vermont and

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Utah, secured 8 votes. Roosevelt carried Pennsylvania the rock-bound Republican State, Missouri which was usually Democratic, South Dakota, Washington, Michigan, and eleven out of the thirteen votes of California. These figures, analyzed calmly, after the issues and passions have cooled into history, indicate two things. First, the amazing personal popularity of Roosevelt, who, against the opposition of the Republican Machine and all its ramifications, had so easily defeated President Taft, the candidate of that Machine. And secondly, it proved that Roosevelt, and not Taft, really represented a large majority of what had been the Republican Party. Therefore, it was the Taft faction which, in spite of the plain evidence given at the choice of the delegates, and at the Convention itself — evidence which the Machine tried to ignore and suppress — it was the Taft faction and not Roosevelt which split the Republican Party in 1912.

Had it allowed the preference of the majority to express itself by the nomination of Roosevelt, there is every reason to believe that he would have been elected. For we must remember that the Democratic Platform was hardly less progressive than that of the Progressives themselves. Counting the Wilson and the Roosevelt vote together, we find 10,412,000 votes were cast for Progressive principles against

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3,483,000 votes for the reactionary Conservatives. And yet the gray wolves of the Republican Party, and its Old Guard, and its Machine, proclaimed to the country that its obsolescent doctrines represented the desires and the ideals of the United States in 1912!

Although the campaign, as conducted by the Republicans, seemed listless, it did not lack venom. Being a family fight between the Taft men and the Roosevelt men, it had the bitterness which family quarrels develop. Mr. Taft and most of his Secretaries had known the methods of Mr. Roosevelt and his Ministers. They could counter, therefore, charges of incompetence and indifference by recalling the inconsistencies, or worse, of Roosevelt's régime. When the Progressives charged the Taft Administration with being easy on the Big Interests, Attorney-General Wickersham resorted to a simple sum in arithmetic in order to contradict them, showing that whereas Roosevelt began forty-four Anti-Trust suits, and concluded only four important cases during his seven and a half years in office, under Taft sixty-six new suits were begun and many of the old ones were successfully concluded. Some great cases, like that of the Standard Oil and of the Railroad Rates, had been settled, which equaled in importance any that Roosevelt had taken up. In the course

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of debate on the stump, each side made virulent accusations against the other, and things were said which were not true then and have long since been regretted by the sayers. That happens in all political contests.

Roosevelt himself, being the incarnation, if not indeed the cause, of the Progressive Party, had to endure an incessant volley of personal attack. They charged him with inordinate ambition. We heard how Mr. William Barnes, Jr., the would-be savior of the country, implied that Roosevelt must be defeated in order to prevent the establishment of monarchy in the United States. Probably Mr. Barnes, in his moments of reflection, admitted to himself that he did not really mean that, but many campaign orators and editors repeated the insinuation and besought free-born Americans not to elect a candidate who would assume the title of King Theodore. Many of his critics could account for his leaving the Republican Party and heading another, only on the theory that he was moved by a desire for revenge. If he could not rule he would ruin. The old allegation that he must be crazy was of course revived.

After the election, the Republican Regulars, who had stubbornly refused to read the handwriting on the wall during the previous four years, heaped new abuse upon him. They said that he had betrayed the

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Party. They said that he had shown himself an ingrate towards Taft, whose achievements in the Presidency awoke his envy. And more recently, many persons who have loathed the Administration of President Wilson, blame Roosevelt for having brought down this curse upon the country.

These various opinions and charges seem to me to be mistaken; and in the foregoing chapters, if I have truly divined Theodore Roosevelt's character, every reader should see that his action in entering the field for the Republican nomination in 1912, and then in founding the Progressive Party, was the perfectly natural culmination of his career. Some one said that he went off at a tangent in 1912. Some one else has said better that this tangent was a straight line leading back to 1882, when he sat in the New York Assembly. Remember that the love of Justice was from boyhood his leading principle. Remember that, after he succeeded in having a law passed relieving the miserably poor cigar-makers from the hideous conditions under which they had to work, a judge declared the law unconstitutional, thereby proving to Roosevelt that the courts, which should be the citadels of Justice, might and did, in this case, care more for the financial interests of landowners than for the health, life, and soul of human beings. That example of injustice was branded on his heart, and

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he resolved to combat the judicial league with inhumanity, wherever he met it. So Abraham Lincoln, when, at the age of twenty-two he first saw a slave auction in New Orleans, said, in indignant horror, to his companion, John Hanks: "If I ever get a chance to hit that thing [meaning slavery] I'll hit it hard." Exactly thirty years later, Abraham Lincoln, as President, was hitting that thing — slavery — so hard that it perished. Roosevelt's experience as Assemblyman, as Civil Service Commissioner, as Police Commissioner, as Governor, and as President, had confirmed his belief that the decisions of the courts often stood between the People and Justice.

Especially in his war on the Interests was he angered at finding corporate abuses, and even criminal methods, comfortably protected by an upholstery of favoring laws. With that tact and willingness to compromise on non-essentials in order to gain his essential object, which mark him as a statesman, he used the Republican Party, naturally the party of the plutocrats who controlled the Interests, just as long as he could. Then, when the Republican Machine rose against him, he quitted it and founded the Progressive Party, to be the instrument for carrying on and completing the great reforms he had at heart. Here was no desertion, no betrayal; here was, first of all, common sense; if the road no longer

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leads towards your goal, you leave it and take another. No one believed more sincerely than Roosevelt did, in fealty to party. In 1884 he would not bolt, because he hoped that the good which the Republican principles would accomplish would more than offset the harm which the nomination of Blaine would inflict. But in 1912, the Republicans cynically rejected his cause which he had tried to make the Republican cause, and then, as in 1884, he held that the cause was more important than the individual, and he followed this idea loyally, lead where it might.

In trying thus to state Roosevelt's position fairly, I do not mean to imply that I should agree with his conclusions in regard to the Recall of the Judicial Decisions; and the experiments which have already been made with the Referendum and Initiative and Direct Primaries are so unsatisfactory that Roosevelt himself would probably have recognized that the doubts, which many of us felt when he first proposed those measures, have been justified. But I wish to emphasize my admiration for the large consistency of his career, and my conviction that, without his crowning action in 1912, he would have failed to be the moral force which he was. If ambition, if envy, if a selfish desire to rule, had been the motives which guided him, he would have lain low in 1912;

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for all his friends and the managers of the Republican Party assured him that if he would stand *aside* then, he would be unanimously nominated by the Republicans in 1916. But he could not be tempted.

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CHAPTER XXIII

THE BRAZILIAN ORDEAL

"THEY will be throwing rotten apples at me soon," Theodore had said to his sister, on the day when New York went frantic in placing him among the gods. His treatment, after he championed Progressivism, showed him to be clairvoyant. Not only did his political opponents belabor him — that was quite natural — but his friends, having failed to persuade him not to take the fatal leap, let him see plainly that, while he still had their affection, they had lost their respect for his judgment. He himself bore the defeat of 1912 with the same valiant cheerfulness with which he took every disappointment and thwarting. But he was not stolid, much less indifferent. "It is all very well to talk with the Crusading spirit," he said after the election, "and of the duty to spend and be spent; and I feel it absolutely as regards myself; but I hate to see my Crusading lieutenants suffer for the cause." He was thinking of the eager young men, including some of his kinsmen, who had gone into the campaign because they believed in him.

His close friends did not follow him, but they still

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loved him. And it was a sign of his open-mindedness that he would listen to their opinions and even consult them, although he knew that they entirely rejected his Progressivism. General Luke E. Wright, who remained a devoted friend but did not become a Progressive, used to explain what the others called the Colonel's aberration, as being really a very subtle piece of wisdom. Experienced ranchmen, he would say, when their herds stampede in a sudden alarm, spur their horses through the rushing cattle, fire their revolvers into the air, and gradually, by making the herds suppose that men and beasts are all together in their wild dash, work their way to the front. Then they cleverly make the leaders swing round, and after a long stampede the herd comes panting back to the place it started from. This, General Wright said, is what Roosevelt was doing with the multitudes of Radicals who seemed to be headed for perdition.

Just as he had absented himself in Africa for a year, after retiring from the Presidency, so Roosevelt decided to make one more trip for hunting and exploration. As he could not go to the North Pole, he said, because that would be poaching on Peary's field, he selected South America. He had long wished to visit the Southern Continent, and invita-

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tions to speak at Rio Janeiro and at Buenos Aires gave him an excuse for setting out. As before, he started with the distinct purpose of collecting animal and botanical specimens; this time for the American Museum of Natural History in New York, which provided two trained naturalists to accompany him. His son Kermit, toughened by the previous adventure, went also.

Having paid his visits and seen the civilized parts of Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, he ascended the Paraguay River and then struck across the plateau which divides its watershed from that of the tributaries of the Amazon; for he proposed to make his way through an unexplored region in Central Brazil and reach the outposts of civilization on the Great River. Dr. Osborn had dissuaded him from going through a tract where the climate was known to be most pernicious. The Brazilian Government had informed him that, by the route he had chosen, he would meet a large river — the Rio da Duvido, the River of Doubt — by which he could descend to the Amazon. Roosevelt's account of this exploration, given in his "The Brazilian Wilderness," belongs among the masterpieces of explorers' records.

There were some twenty persons, including a dozen or fifteen native rowers and pack-bearers, in his party. They had canoes and dugouts, supplies of

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food for about forty days, and a carefully chosen outfit. With high hopes they put their craft into the water and moved downstream. But on the fourth day they found rapids ahead, and from that time on they were constantly obliged to land and carry their dugouts and stores round a cataract. The peril of being swept over the falls was always imminent, and as the trail which constituted their portages had to be cut through the matted forest, their labors were increased. In the first eleven days, they progressed only sixty miles. No one knew the distance they would have to traverse nor how long the river would be broken by falls and cataracts before it came down into the plain of the Amazon. Some of their canoes were smashed on the rocks; two of the natives were drowned. They watched their provisions shrink. Contrary to their expectations, the forest had almost no animals. If they could shoot a monkey or a monster lizard, they rejoiced at having a little fresh meat. Tropical insects — of which the pium seems to have been the worst — bit them day and night and caused inflammation and even infection. Man-eating fish lived in the river, making it dangerous for the men when they tried to cool their inflamed bodies by a swim. Most of the party had malaria, and could be kept going only by large doses of quinine. Roosevelt, while in the water, wounded his leg on a rock,

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inflammation set in, and prevented him from walking, so that he had to be carried across the portages.

The physical strength of the party, sapped by sickness and fatigue, was visibly waning. Still the cataracts continued to impede their progress and to add terribly to their toil. The supply of food had shrunk so much that the rations were restricted and amounted to little more than enough to keep the men able to go forward slowly. Then fever attacked Roosevelt, and they had to wait for a few days because he was too weak to be moved. He besought them to leave him and hurry along to safety, because every day they delayed consumed their diminishing store of food, and they might all die of starvation. They refused to leave him, however, and he secretly determined to shoot himself unless a change for the better in his condition came soon. It came; they moved forward. At last, they left the rapids behind them and could drift and paddle on the unobstructed river. Roosevelt lay in the bottom of a dugout, shaded by a bit of canvas put up over his head, and too weak from sickness, he told me, even to splash water on his face, for he was almost fainting from the muggy heat and the tropical sunshine.

On April 15th, forty-eight days after they began their voyage on the River of Doubt, they saw a peasant, a rubber-gatherer, the first human being they

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had met. Thenceforward they journeyed without incident. The River of Doubt flowed into the larger river Madeira where they found a steamer which took them to Manaos on the Amazon. A regular line of steamers connects Manaos with New York, where Roosevelt and Kermit and Cherrie, one of the naturalists, landed on May 19, 1914. During the homeward voyage Roosevelt slowly recovered his strength, but he had never again the iron physique with which he had embarked the year before. His friends had urged him not to go, warning him that a man of fifty-four was already too old to waste his reserve force on unnecessary enterprises. But his love of adventure, his passion for testing his endurance and pluck by facing the grimmest dangers, and his wish to keep out of American political turmoil for a time, prevailed against wiser counsel. The Brazilian Wilderness stole away ten years of his life.

I do not know whether later, when he found himself checked by recurrent illness, he regretted having chosen to encounter that ordeal in Brazil. He was a man who wasted no time over regrets. The past for him was done. The material out of which he wove his life was the present or the future. Days gone were as water that has flowed under the mill. Acting always from what he regarded as the best motives of the present, he faced with equal heart whatever

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result they brought. So when he found on his return home that some geographers and South American explorers laughed at his story of the River of Doubt, he laughed, too, at their incredulity, and presently the Brazilian Government, having established the truth of his exploration and named the river after him, Rio Teodoro, his laughter prevailed. He took real satisfaction in having placed on the map of Central Brazil a river six hundred miles long.

New York made no festival for him on this second home-coming. The city and the country welcomed him, but not effusively. The American people, however, felt a void without Roosevelt. Whether they always agreed with him or not, they found him perpetually interesting, and during the ten or eleven weeks when he went into the Brazilian silence and they did not know whether he was alive or dead, they learned how much his presence and his ready speech had meant to them. And so they rejoiced to know that he was safe and at home again at Sagamore Hill.

Roosevelt insisted, imprudently, on accompanying his son Kermit to Madrid, where he was to marry the daughter of the American Minister. He made the trip to Spain and back, as quickly as possible, and then he turned to politics. That year, Congressmen and several Governors were to be elected, and

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Roosevelt allowed himself to be drawn into the campaign. As I have said, he was like the consummate actor who, in spite of his protestations, can never bid farewell to the stage. And now a peculiar obligation moved him. He must help the friends who had followed him eagerly into the conflict of 1912, and, in helping them, he must save the Progressive principles and drive them home with still greater cogency. He delivered a remarkable address at Pittsburgh; he toured New York State in an automobile; he spoke to multitudes in Pennsylvania from the back platform of a special train; he visited Louisiana and several other States. But the November elections disappointed him. The Progressive Party, if not dead, had ceased to be a real power in politics; but Progressivism, as an influence and an ideal, was surviving under other forms.

Probably the chief cause for this wane was the putting into operation, by President Wilson and the triumphant Democrats, of many of the Progressive suggestions which the Democratic Platform had also contained. The psychological effect of success in politics is always important and this accounted for the cooling of the zeal of a certain number of enthusiasts who had vociferously supported Roosevelt in 1912. The falling-off in the vote measured further the potency of Roosevelt's personal magnetism;

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thousands voted for him who would not vote for other candidates professing his principles. Finally, other issues — the imbroglio with Mexico, for instance — were looming up, and exciting a different interest among the American people.

Before we discuss the greatest issue of all, in which Theodore Roosevelt's career as a patriot culminated, we must recall two or three events which absorbed him at the time and furnished evidence of vital import to those who would appraise his character fairly.

During the campaign of 1912, his enemies resorted to all sorts of slanders, calumnies, lies, ignoble always, and often indecent, to blacken him. On October 12th, the *Iron Ore*, a trade paper edited by George A. Newett at Ishpeming, Michigan, pubished this accusation: "Roosevelt lies and curses in a most disgusting way; he gets drunk too, and that not infrequently, and all of his intimates know about it." When he was President, Roosevelt had appointed Newett as postmaster, but Newett stayed by the Republican Party, and did not scruple to serve it, as he supposed, in this way. The charge of drunkenness spread so far and, as usual, so many persons said that where there is much smoke there must be some fire, that Roosevelt determined to crush that lie once for all. He would not have it stand unchallenged, to

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shame his children after he was dead, or to furnish food for the maggots which feed on the reputations of great men. So he brought suit against Newett. His counsel, James H. Pound, assembled nearly two-score witnesses, who had known Roosevelt since he left College, men who had visited him, had hunted with him, had served with him in the Spanish War, had been his Cabinet Ministers, journalists who had followed him on his campaigning tours, detectives, and his personal body-servant; General Leonard Wood, and Jacob Riis, and Dr. Alexander Lambert, who had been his family physician for a quarter of a century. This cloud of witnesses all testified unanimously that they had never seen him drink anything stronger than wine, except as a medicine; that he took very little wine, and that they had never seen him drunk. They also declared that he was not a curser or blasphemer.

After listening to this mass of evidence for a week, Newett begged to withdraw his charge and to apologize, and he confessed that he had nothing but hearsay on which to base his slanders. Then Roosevelt addressed the court and asked it not to impose damages upon the defendant, as he had not prosecuted the libeler with the intention of getting satisfaction in money. He wrote one of his sisters from Marquette, where the trial was held: "I deemed it

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best not to demand money damages; the man is a country editor, and while I thoroly[1] depise him, I do not care to seem to persecute him." (May 31, 1913.)

Roosevelt had to undergo one other trial, this time as defendant. The managers of the Republican Party and the Interests behind them, not content with blocking his way to the nomination in 1912, wished utterly to destroy him as a political factor; for they still dreaded that, as a Progressive, he might have a triumphant resurrection and recapture the confidence of the American people. To accomplish their purpose they wished to discredit him as a reform politician, and as a leader in civic and social welfare.

Roosevelt himself gave the occasion for their onslaught upon him. In supporting Harvey D. Hinman, the Progressive candidate for the Governor of New York in 1914, he declared that William Barnes, Jr., who managed the Republican Machine politics in that State, had a bi-partisan alliance with the Democratic Machine in the interest of crooked politics and crooked business. Mr. Barnes, in whose ears the word "Boss" sounded obnoxious as applied to himself, brought suit for libel, and it came to trial at

[1] I copy "thoroly," as he wrote it, as a reminder that Roosevelt practiced the spelling reform which he advocated.

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Syracuse on April 19, 1915. Mr. Barnes's counsel, Mr. Ivins, peered into every item of Mr. Roosevelt's political career with a microscope. Mr. Barnes had, of course, all the facts, all the traditions that his long experience at Albany could give him. And as he dated back to Boss Platt's time, he must have heard, at first hand from the Senator, his relations with Roosevelt as Governor. But the most searching examination by Mr. Barnes brought him no evidence, and cross-examination, pursued for many days, brought him no more. When it became Roosevelt's turn to reply, he showed how the *Albany Evening Journal*, Mr. Barnes's organ, had profited by illegal political advertising. He proved the existence of the bi-partisan alliance with the Democratic Machine, and showed its effects on legislation and elections. After deliberating two days, the jury brought in a verdict in favor of Roosevelt.

The trial, which had lasted two months, and cost Roosevelt $52,000 (so expensive is it for an honest man to defend his honesty against hostile politicians!) decided two things: first, that Mr. Barnes was a Boss, and had used crooked methods; and next, that Theodore Roosevelt, under the most intense scrutiny which his enemies could employ, was freed from any suspicion of dishonest political methods or acts. As William M. Ivins, attorney for

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Mr. Barnes, left the New York Constitutional Convention to try the case at Syracuse, he said with unconcealed and alluring self-satisfaction to Mr. Root: "I am going to nail Roosevelt's hide to the barn door." Mr. Root replied: "Be sure it is Roosevelt's and not some other hide that is nailed there."

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CHAPTER XXIV

PROMETHEUS BOUND

THE event which put Roosevelt's patriotism to the final test, and, as it proved, evoked all his great qualities in a last display, was the outbreak of the Atrocious World War in August, 1914. By the most brutal assault in modern times, Germany, and her lackey ally, Austria, without notice, overran Belgium and Northeastern France, and devastated Serbia. The other countries, especially the United States, were too startled at first to understand either the magnitude or the possible implications of this war. On August 18th, President Wilson issued the first of his many variegated messages, in which he gave this warning: "We must be impartial in thought as well as in action, must put a curb upon our sentiments as well as upon every transaction that might be construed as a preference of one party to the struggle before another." He added that his first thought was of America.

Any one who analyzed his message carefully must have wondered how it was possible, in the greatest moral issue which had ever been thrust before the

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world's judgment, to remain impartial "even in thought" between good and evil. Perhaps it was right, though hardly necessary, to impress upon Americans that they must look after their own interests first. Would it not have been more seemly, however, especially for President Wilson, who on the previous Fourth of July had uttered his sanctimonious tribute to the superiority in virtue of the United States to all other nations, to urge his countrymen to put some of this virtue into practice at that crisis?

But the masses did not reason. They used his admonition to remain neutral "even in thought" to justify them in not having any great anxiety as to who was right and who wrong; and they interpreted his concern for "America first" as authorizing them to go about their affairs and profit as much as they could in the warlike conditions. Some of us, indeed, took an opposite view. We saw that the conflict, if fought to a finish, would decide whether Democracy or Despotism should rule the earth. We felt that the United States, the vastest, strongest, and most populous Republic in the world, pledged to uphold Democracy, should throw itself at once on the side of the European nations which were struggling, against great odds, to save Democracy from the most atrocious of despots. Inevitably, we were regarded as

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incorrigible idealists whose suggestions ran counter to etiquette and were, after all, crazy.

For several years, Roosevelt had been a contributing editor of the *Outlook*, and although his first instinct, when the Germans ravished Belgium, was to protest and then, if necessary, to follow up our protest by a show of force, he wrote in the *Outlook* an approval of our taking immediately a neutral attitude. Still, he did not let this preclude stern action later. "Neutrality," he said, "may be of prime necessity to maintain peace . . . but we pay the penalty of this action on behalf of peace for ourselves, and possibly for others in the future, by forfeiting our right to do anything on behalf of peace for the Belgians at present." Three years afterwards these sentences of his were unearthed by his enemies and flung against him; but his dominant purpose, from the start, was too well known for any one to accuse him of inconsistency. He assumed, when President Wilson issued his impartial "even in thought" message, that the President must have some secret diplomatic information which would vindicate it.

As the months went on, however, it became clear to him that Mr. Wilson was pursuing towards the European War the same policy of contradictions, — of brief paroxysms of boldness, followed by long periods of lassitude, which had marked his conduct

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of our relations towards the Mexican bandits. He saw only too well, also, into what ignoble depths this policy led us. Magnificent France, throttled Belgium, England willing but not yet ready, devastated Serbia, looked to us for sympathy and help, and all the sympathy they got came from private persons in America, and of help there was none. Meanwhile, the Germans undermined and gangrened the American people. Every ship brought over their slyest and most unscrupulous propagandists, who coöperated with the despicable German professors and other agents already planted here, and opened the sewers of their doctrines. Their spies began to go up and down the land, without check. Count Bernstorff, the German Ambassador, assumed to play with the Administration at Washington as a cat might play with half a score of mice, feeling sure that he could devour them when he chose. A European gentleman, who came from a neutral country, and called on Bernstorff in April, 1915, told me that when he asked the Ambassador how he got on with the United States, he replied: "Very well, indeed; we pay no attention to the Government, but go ahead and do what we please." Within a fortnight the sinking of the *Lusitania* showed that Bernstorff had not boasted idly.

Roosevelt understood the harm which the Ger-

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man conspiracy was doing among our people, not only by polluting their ideals, but actually strengthening the coils which the propagandists had been winding, to strangle at the favorable moment American independence itself. We discovered then that the process of Germanization had been going on secretly during twenty years. Since England was the chief enemy in the way of German world domination, the German-Americans laid themselves out to render the English odious here. And they worked to such good purpose that the legal officers of the Administration admonished the American people that the English, in holding up merchant vessels laden with cargoes for Germany, committed breaches against international law which were quite as heinous as the sinking by German submarines of ships laden with American non-combatants. They magnified the loss of a cargo of perishable food and set it against the ferocious destruction of neutral human beings. Senator Lodge, however, expressed the clear thought and right feeling of Americans when he said that we were more moved by the thought of the corpse of an innocent victim of the Hun submarines than by that of a bale of cotton.

These enormities, these sins of omission and commission, of which Roosevelt declared our Government guilty, amazed and exasperated him, and from

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the beginning of 1915 onward, he set himself three tasks. He wished to expose and circumvent German machinations over here. Next, he deemed it a pressing duty to rouse our country to the recognition that we must prepare at once for war. He saw, as every other sensible person saw, that as the conflict grew more terrible in Europe and spread into Asia and Africa, we should be drawn into it, and that therefore we must make ready. He seconded the plan of General Leonard Wood to organize a camp for volunteers at Plattsburg and other places; and what that plan accomplished in fitting American soldiers to meet and vanquish the Kaiser's best troops, has since been proved. President Wilson, however, would not officially countenance any preparation which, so far as the public was allowed to know his reasons, might be taken by the Germans as an unfriendly act. Finally, Roosevelt labored unceasingly to revive and make militant the ideals of true Americanism.

That the Germans accurately gauged that President Wilson would not sanction any downright vigorous action against them, was sufficiently proved on May 7, 1915, when German submarines torpedoed and sank, at two o'clock in the afternoon, the British passenger steamship *Lusitania*, eastward bound, a few miles south of the Point of Kinsale on

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the Irish coast. With her went down nearly thirteen hundred persons, all of them non-belligerents and more than one hundred of them American men, women, and children. This atrocious crime the Germans committed out of their stupid miscalculation of the motives which govern non-German peoples. They thought that the British and Americans would be so terrorized that they would no longer dare to cross the ocean. The effect was, of course, just the opposite. A cry of horror swept over the civilized world, and swiftly upon it came a great demand for punishment and retribution.

Then was the moment for President Wilson to break off diplomatic relations with Germany. The very day after the waters of the British Channel had closed over the innocent victims, President Wilson made an address in which he announced that "a nation may be too proud to fight." The country gasped for breath when it read those words, which seemed to be the official statement of the President of the United States that foreign nations might outrage, insult, and degrade this nation with impunity, because, as the rabbit retires into its hole, so we would burrow deep into our pride and show neither resentment nor sense of honor. As soon as possible, word came from the White House that, as the President's speech had been written before the sinking

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of the *Lusitania*, his remarks had no bearing on that atrocity. Pride is a wonderful cloak for cowards, but it never saves them. Perhaps the most amazing piece of impudence in Germany's long list was the formal visit described by the newspapers which the German Ambassador, Bernstorff, paid to Mr. Bryan, the Secretary of State, to present to our Government the formal condolence of Germany and himself at this painful happening. Bernstorff, we know now, planned the sinking and gave the German Government notice by wireless just where the submarines could best destroy the *Lusitania*, on that Friday afternoon.

Ten days later, Mr. Wilson sent a formal protest to Germany in which he recalled "the humane and enlightened attitude hitherto assumed by the Imperial German Government in matters of international right, and particularly in regard to the freedom of the seas"; and he professed to have "learned to recognize the German views and the German influence in the field of international obligation as always engaged upon the side of justice and humanity." If Mr. Bryan had written this, no one would have been astonished, because Mr. Bryan made no pretense of knowing even the rudimentary facts of history; but that President Wilson, by profession a historian, should laud, as being always

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engaged in justice and humanity, the nation which, under Frederick the Great, had stolen Silesia and dismembered Poland, and which, in his own lifetime, had garroted Denmark, had forced a wicked war on Austria, had trapped France by lies into another war and robbed her of Alsace-Lorraine, and had only recently wiped its hands, dripping with blood drawn from the Chinese, was amazing!

Small wonder if after that, the German hyphenates lifted up their heads arrogantly in this country, or that the Kaiser in Germany believed that the United States was a mere jelly-fish nation which would tolerate any enormity he might concoct. This was the actual comfort President Wilson's message gave Germany. The negative result was felt among the Allied nations which, struggling against the German Monster like Laocoön in the coils of the Python, took Mr. Wilson's praise of Germany's imaginary love of justice and humanity as a death-warrant for themselves. They could not believe that he who wrote such words, or the American people who swallowed them, could ever be roused to give succor to the Allies in their desperation.

Three years later I asked Roosevelt what he would have done, if he had been President in May, 1915. He said, in substance, that, as soon as he had read

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in the New York newspaper [1] the advertisement which Bernstorff had inserted warning all American citizens from taking passage on the *Lusitania*, he would have sent for Bernstorff and asked him whether the advertisement was officially acknowledged by him. Even Bernstorff, arch-liar that he was, could not have denied it. "I should then have sent to the Department of State to prepare his passports; I should have handed them to him and said, 'You will sail on the *Lusitania* yourself next Friday; an American guard will see you on board, and prevent your coming ashore.' The breaking-off of diplomatic relations with Germany," Roosevelt added, "would probably have meant war, and we were horribly unprepared. But better war, than submission to a humiliation which no President of this country has ever before allowed; better war a thousand times, than to let the Germans go on really making war upon us at sea, and honeycombing the American people with plots on land, while our Government shamelessly lavishes praise on the criminal for his justice and humanity and virtually begs his pardon."

Thus believed Roosevelt in the *Lusitania* crisis, and many others of us agreed with him. The stopping

[1] The advertisement was printed in the New York *Times* of April 23, 1915.

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of German intrigues here, the breaking-off of diplomatic relations, would have been of inestimable benefit to this country. It would have caused every American to rally to the country's defense. It would have forced the reluctant Administration to prepare a navy and an army. It would have sifted the patriotic sheep from the sneaking and spying goats. It would have brought immense comfort to the Allies and corresponding despondency to the Huns. For Germany plunged into the war believing that England would remain neutral. When England came in, to redeem her word of honor, Germany's frantic purpose was to have us keep neutral and supply her with food and munitions. Had she known that there was any possibility of our actively joining the Allies, she would have hastened to make peace. Our first troops could have reached France in the early spring of 1916. They would not have been, of course, shock troops, but their presence in France would have been an assurance to the Allies that we were coming with all our force, and the Germans would soon have understood that this meant their doom. By the summer of 1916, the war would have been over.

Think what this implies! Two years and a half of fighting would never have taken place. At least three million lives among the Allied armies would have

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been saved. Russia would have been spared revolution, chaos, Bolshevism. Some, at least, of the myriads of massacred Armenians would not have been slain. Thousands of square miles of devastated territory would not have been spoiled. A hundred billions of dollars for equipping and carrying on the war would never have been spent. All this is not an idle dream; it is the calm statement of what would probably have happened if President Wilson, after the *Lusitania* outrage, had dared to break with Germany. History will hold him accountable for those millions of lives sacrificed, for the unspeakable suffering which the people of the ravaged regions had to endure, for the dissolution of Russia, which threatened to throw down the bases of our civilization, and for the waste of incalculable treasure.

President Wilson's apologists assert that the country was not ready for him to take any resolute attitude towards Germany in May, 1915. They argue that if he had attempted to do so there would have been great internal dissension, perhaps even civil war, and especially that the German sections would have opposed preparations for war so stubbornly as to have made them impossible. This is pure assumption. The truth is that whenever or wherever an appeal was made to American patriotism, it met with an immediate response. The sinking of the

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Lusitania created such a storm of horror and indignation that if the President had lifted a finger, the manhood of America, and the womanhood, too, would have risen to back him up. But instead of lifting a finger, he wrote that message to Germany, praising the Germans for their traditional respect for justice and humanity. And a long time had yet to pass before he made the least sign of encouragement to those Americans who would uphold the honor of the United States and would have this, the greatest of Republics, take its due part in defending Democracy against the Huns' attempt to wipe Democracy off the earth forever.

Having missed his opportunity then, Mr. Wilson could of course plead that the country was less and less inclined to go to war, because he furnished the pro-German plotters the very respite they had needed for carrying on their work. By unavowed ways they secured a strong support among the members of the National House of Representatives and the Senate. They disguised themselves as pacifists, and they found it easy to wheedle the "lunatic fringe" of native pacifists into working for the domination of William of Hohenzollern over the United States, and for the establishing of his world dominion. The Kaiser's propagandists spread evil arguments to justify all the Kaiser's crimes, and they found willing

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disciples even among the members of the Administration to repeat and uphold these arguments.

They told us, for instance, that their massacre served the victims of the *Lusitania* right for taking passage on a British steamship. They even wished to pass a law forbidding Americans from traveling on the ocean at all, because, by doing so, they might be blown up by the Germans, and that would involve this country in diplomatic difficulties with Germany. Next, the Germans protested against our selling munitions of war to the Allies. Neither custom nor international law forbade doing this, and the protest stood out in stark impudence when it came from Germany, the country which, for fifty years and more, had sold munitions to every one who asked and had not hesitated to sell impartially to both antagonists in the Russo-Japanese War. By playing on the sentimentality of this same "lunatic fringe," the German intriguers almost succeeded in driving through a bill to stop this traffic. They knew the true Prussian way of whimpering when bullying did not avail them. And so they not only whimpered about our sending shells over to kill the German soldiers, but they whimpered also over the dire effects which the Allied blockade produced upon the non-combatant population of Germany.

These things went on, not only a whole year, but

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far into the second after the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Roosevelt never desisted from charging that the person ultimately responsible for them was President Wilson, and he believed that the President's apparent self-satisfaction would avail him little when he stands at the bar of History.

It may be that an entire people may lose for a time its sense of logic. We have just had the most awful proof that, through a long-continued and deliberate education for that purpose, the German people lost its moral sense and set up diabolical standards in place of those common to all civilized races. We know that religious hysteria has at different times, like the influenza, swept over a nation, or that a society has lost its taste for generations together in art, and in poetry. We remember that the Witchcraft Delusion obsessed our ancestors. It is not impossible, therefore, that between 1914 and 1918 the American people passed through a stage in which it threw logic to the winds. This would account at least for its infatuation for President Wilson, in spite of his undisguised inconsistencies and appalling blunders. A people who thought logically and kept certain principles steadily before it, could hardly otherwise have tolerated Mr. Wilson's "too-proud-to-fight" speech, and his message to Germany after the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Or his

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subsequent endeavor to make the Americans think that there was no choice between the causes for which the Allies and the Teutons were fighting. Was it not he who said that Europe was war-mad, and that America had better mind her own business, and look the other way? Did he not declare that we were forced into war, and then that we were not? That a President of the United States should assert or even insinuate these things during the great War for Humanity — and by Humanity I mean every trait, every advance which has lifted men above the level of the beast, where they originated, to the level of the human with its potential ascent to heights undreamed of — is amazing now: what will it be a generation hence?

Roosevelt watched impatiently while these strange phases passed before him. He listened angrily at the contradictory utterances. He felt the ignominy of our country's being at such a depth. He knew Germany too well to suppose that she could be deterred by President Wilson's messages. He saw something comic in shaking a long fore-finger and saying, "Tut, tut! I shall consider being very harsh, if you commit these outrages three more times." To shake your fist at all, and then to shake your finger, seemed to Roosevelt almost imbecile. Cut off from serving the cause of American patriotism in any public capacity,

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Roosevelt struggled to take his part by writing. Every month in the *Outlook*, and subsequently in the *Metropolitan Magazine*, he gave vent to his pent-up indignation. The very titles of some of his papers reveal his animus: "Fear God and Take Your Own Part"; "A Sword for Defense"; "America First: A Phrase or a Fact?"; "Uncle Sam's Only Friend is Uncle Sam"; "Dual Nationality"; "Preparedness." In each of these he poured forth with unflagging vehemence the fundamental verities on which our American society should rest. He showed that it was not a mere competition in letter-writing between the honey-worded Mr. Wilson and the sophisticated Bernstorff or the Caliban-sly Bethmann-Hollweg, but that God was in the crisis, and that no adroitness of phrase or trick of diplomacy could get rid of Him. He showed that there could not be two kinds of Americans: one genuine, which believed wholly and singly in the United States, and the other cunning and mongrel, which swore allegiance to the United States — lip service — and kept its allegiance to Germany — heart service. He lost no opportunity to make his illustrations clear. On resigning as Secretary of State after the sinking of the *Lusitania*, because President Wilson insisted on mildly calling Germany's attention to that crime, Mr. Bryan addressed a large audience of Germans.

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Then Roosevelt held him up to the gaze of the American people as a man who had no true Americanism.

Lest I should be suspected of misinterpreting or exaggerating Roosevelt's opinion of President Wilson, during the first two years of the war, I quote two or three passages, taken at random, which will prove, I hope, that I have summarized him truly.

He says, for instance:

> Professional pacifists of the type of Messrs. Bryan, Jordan, and Ford, who in the name of peace preach doctrines that would entail not merely utter infamy, but utter disaster to their own country, never in practice venture to denounce concrete wrong by dangerous wrongdoers. . . .
>
> These professional pacifists, through President Wilson, have forced the country into a path of shame and dishonor during the past eighteen months. Thanks to President Wilson, the most powerful of Democratic nations has refused to recognize the binding moral force of international public law. Our country has shirked its clear duty. One outspoken and straightforward declaration by this government against the dreadful iniquities perpetrated in Belgium, Armenia, and Servia would have been worth to humanity a thousand times as much as all that the professional pacifists have done in the past fifty years. . . . Fine phrases become sickening when they represent nothing whatever but adroitness in phrase-making, with no intention of putting deeds behind the phrases.

After the American messages in regard to the sinking of the *Lusitania* had brought no apology, much less any suggestion of redress, Roosevelt said:

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Apparently President Wilson has believed that the American people would permanently forget their dead and would slur over the dishonor and disgrace to the United States by that basest of all the base pleas of cowardly souls which finds expression in the statement: "Oh, well, anyhow the President kept us out of war!" The people who make this plea assert with quavering voices that they "are behind the President." So they are; well behind him. The farther away from the position of duty and honor and hazard he has backed, the farther behind him these gentry have stood — or run.

Finally, Roosevelt stated with deadly clearness the position into which Wilson's vacillating policy had driven us:

The United States has not a friend in the world. Its conduct, under the leadership of its official representatives, for the last five years and, above all, for the last three years, has deprived it of the respect and has secured for it the contempt of every one of the great civilized nations of mankind. Peace treaties and windy Fourth-of-July eloquence and the base materialism which seeks profit as an incident to the abandonment of duty will not help us now. For five years our rulers at Washington have believed that all this people cared for was easy money, absence of risk and effort, and sounding platitudes which were not reduced to action. We have so acted as to convince other nations that in very truth we *are* too proud to fight; and the man who is too proud to fight is in practice always treated as just proud enough to be kicked. We have held our peace when our women and children were slain. We have turned away our eyes from the sight of our brother's woe.

"He kept us out of war," was a paradoxical battle-cry for one who in a very short time thereafter wished

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to pose as the winner of the greatest war in history. But the battle-cry, it turned out, was used chiefly for political purposes. The year 1916 was a Presidential year and his opponents suspected that everything President Wilson had done at home or abroad had been planned by him with a view to the effect which it might have on his reëlection. Politicians of all parties saw that the war was the vital question to be decided by the political campaign. For the Democrats, Wilson was, of course, the only candidate; but the Republicans and the Progressives had their own schism to settle. First of all, they must attempt to reunite and to present a candidate whom both factions would support; if they did not, the catastrophe of 1912 would be repeated, and Wilson would again easily win against two warring Progressive and Republican candidates. The elections in 1914 showed that the Progressive Party was disintegrating. Should its leaders strive now to revive its strength or should they bow to the inevitable, combine with the Republicans on a satisfactory candidate, and urge all the Progressives as a patriotic duty to support him?

All depended on Roosevelt's decision. After reflection, he consented to run for nomination by the Progressives. It soon became plain, however, that the Republicans would not take him back. The

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Machine did not want him on any terms: many of the Republicans blinding themselves to the fact that, as the number of votes cast in 1912 proved, Taft and not he had split the Republican Party, held Roosevelt responsible for the defeat in that year. One heard also of some Republicans who, for lack of a better reason, opposed Roosevelt because, they said, that Roosevelt having put Taft into the Presidency, ought not to have "gone back" on him. Yet these same persons, if they had taken a partner into their firm to carry on a certain policy, and had found him pursuing a different one, would hardly have argued that they were in loyalty bound to continue to support this partner as long as he chose. The consideration which weighed with a much larger number, however, was that Roosevelt had so antagonized the German vote and the Pacifist vote and all the other anti-American votes, that he might not be a winning candidate. Accordingly, the Republicans sought for somebody who would please everybody, and yet would have enough personal strength to be a leader. They pitched on Charles E. Hughes, former Governor of New York State, and then a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. The unwisdom of going to the Supreme Bench for a standard-bearer was immediately apparent; because all the proprieties prevented Justice Hughes from ex-

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pressing any opinion on political subjects until he resigned from the Court. Hence, it followed that no great enthusiasm could be aroused over his candidacy for nomination since nobody knew what his policy would be.

The Progressives held their Convention in Chicago on June 5th, the same day that the Republicans met there. Some of the original, Simon-Pure Progressives disapproved of this collusion, declaring that it represented a "deal," and that the Progressive Party, which had come into existence as a rebuke of Machine politics, ought never to soil itself by entering into a "deal." Nevertheless, the will of the more worldly-minded prevailed, and they probably thought that there would be a better chance to have the Republicans nominate Roosevelt if he were already the nominee of the Progressives. But they were disappointed. They nominated Roosevelt and the Republicans Justice Hughes. Suspense followed as to whether Roosevelt, by accepting, would oblige the Progressives to organize another campaign. He sent only a conditional acceptance to the Progressive Committee and, a few days later, he announced publicly that he would support Justice Hughes, because he regarded the defeat of Wilson as the most vital object before the American people.

I find among my correspondence from him a reply

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to a letter of mine in which I had quite needlessly urged this action upon him. I quote this passage because it epitomizes what might be expanded over many pages. The letter is dated June 16, 1916:

> I agree entirely with you. I shall do all I can for Mr. Hughes. But don't forget that Mr. Hughes alone can make it possible for me to be efficient in his behalf. If he merely speaks like Mr. Wilson, only a little more weakly, he will rob my support of its effectiveness. Speeches such as those of mine, to which you kindly allude, have their merit only if delivered for a man who is himself speaking uncompromisingly and without equivocation. I have just sent word to Hughes through one of our big New York financiers to make a smashing attack on Wilson for his actions, and to do it immediately, in connection with this Democratic Nominating Convention. Wilson was afraid of me. He never dared answer me; but if Hughes lets him, he will proceed to take the offensive against Hughes. I shall do everything I can for him, but don't forget that the efficiency of what I do must largely depend upon Hughes.

Roosevelt was as good as his word, and made four or five powerful speeches in behalf of Mr. Hughes, speeches which gave a sharper edge to the Republicans' fight. But their campaign was obviously mismanaged. They put their candidate to the torture of making two transcontinental journeys, in which he had to speak incessantly, and they warned him against uttering any downright criticism of the anti-American throng, whose numbers being unknown were feared. President Wilson, on the other hand, unexpectedly flared up in a retort which doubtless

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[Facsimile]

SAGAMORE HILL. Aug 21st 1916

Dear Billy,

Is the enclosed in the form you desire?

The proof can be ~~rather~~ sent here (Oyster Bay, N.Y.), I shall not make many speeches; my first will be in Maine on the 31st of this month; I believe you will find that it puts the "sharper edge" on the campaign issues which you — and I — desire to see put.

Faithfully yours

Theodore Roosevelt

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won votes for him. Jeremiah O'Leary, an Irish agitator in relations with the German propagandists, tried to catch Mr. Wilson in a pro-British snare. The President replied: "I would feel deeply mortified to have you or anybody like you vote for me. Since you have access to so many disloyal Americans, and I have not, I will ask you to convey this message to them."

The result of the election, which took place on November 5th, hung in suspense for many days. Then it appeared that Wilson, by capturing thirteen California votes, had won by 277 electoral votes to 254 for Hughes. Of the popular vote, Wilson got 9,128,000 and Hughes, 8,536,000. So the slogan, "He kept us out of war," accomplished its purpose.

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CHAPTER XXV

PROMETHEUS UNBOUND

DURING the winter of 1916–17, Roosevelt never relaxed his criticism of President Wilson's dilatory and evasive policy, or his efforts to arouse the American people to a sense of their duty to civilization. By this time the President himself felt that it was safe for him to speak up in behalf of Americanism. The year before, Roosevelt having been assured that it would be dangerous to make American and pro-Ally speeches in the Middle West, went straight to the so-called German cities, and was most enthusiastically received where it had been predicted he would be hooted and even mobbed. President Wilson ventured to follow him some time later, and suffered no harm. By the summer of 1916 he became almost reckless, as it seemed, in his utterances. He said to the graduating cadets at West Point: "My conception of America is a conception of infinite dignity, along with quiet, unquestionable power. I ask you, gentlemen, to join with me in that conception, and let us all in our several spheres be soldiers together to realize it."[1] Once he declared

[1] July 14, 1916.

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that he too came of fighting blood. Meanwhile, however, the German submarines went on sinking ships; Bernstorff made his frequent calls of studied impudence at the White House; German agents blew up munitions factories and the warehouses where shells were stored before shipment; and the process of spreading Prussian gangrene throughout our country went on unchecked.

Worse than this, the military situation in Europe was almost disheartening. Imperial Russia had disappeared and the Germans were preparing to carve up the vast amorphous Russian carcass. Having driven their way through the Balkans to Constantinople they were on the point of opening their boasted direct route from Berlin to Bagdad. England, France and Italy began to feel war-weary. The German submarines threatened to cut off their supplies of food, and unless the Allied countries could be succored they might be starved into making peace. When they looked across the Atlantic they beheld this mighty Republic leaving them in the lurch, too busy piling up millions of dollars drawn from the Allies in their distress to heed that distress, and drugging their compunctions, if they had any, by saying to themselves that a nation may be "too proud to fight," and that they had the best authority for remembering that they must remain "neutral even in thought."

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I need not describe in detail what Roosevelt thought of this. He himself expressed his scorn for making war by rhetoric. He knew that a man may boast of coming of fighting blood, and come so late that all the fighting quality in the blood has evaporated. Could not many of the Pacifists trace back to Revolutionary and to Puritan ancestors, who fought as they prayed, without hesitation or doubt, for the Lord of Hosts? They could, and their present attitude simply made their shame the greater. The Colonel had said very early in the conflict: "I do not believe that the firm assertion of our rights means war, but in any event, it is well to remember there are things worse than war." In 1917 he declared: "For two years after the *Lusitania* was sunk, we continued to fawn on the blood-stained murderers of our people, we were false to ourselves and we were false to the cause of right and of liberty and democracy throughout the world." He kept hammering at our need of preparation. He told a great audience at Detroit:[1] "We first hysterically announced that we would not prepare because we were afraid that preparation might make us lose our vantage-ground as a peace-loving people. Then we became frightened and announced loudly that we ought to prepare; that the world was on fire; that our national structure

[1] May 19, 1916.

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was in danger of catching aflame; and that we must immediately make ready. Then we turned another somersault and abandoned all talk of preparedness; and we never did anything more than talk."

At last, at the beginning of 1917, the German truculence became too great even for President Wilson to palliate. The Kaiser, whose atrocious submarine policy had already failed, decided that it could be made to succeed by increasing its horror. He proposed to sink indiscriminately all ships, whether neutral or enemy; but out of his Imperial generosity he would allow the Americans to send one ship a week to Falmouth, England, provided it followed a certain line marked out by him on the chart, flew a certain flag, and was painted a color which he specified. As late as December 18, 1916, the President had put forth a message only less startling than his "too-proud-to-fight" dictum, in which he announced that the warring world must plan for a "peace without victory" if it would hope to end the war at all. "Peace without victory" would mean, of course, a peace favorable to Germany. But the Germans, with characteristic stupidity, instead of using even a specious courtesy towards the President who had been long-suffering in their favor, immediately sent out their "Once-a-week-to-Falmouth"

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order. Perhaps they thought that Mr. Wilson would consent even to that.

President Wilson's friends have assured us that he devotes himself to finding out what the American people wants and then in doing it. He soon learned what the American people wanted, after it understood the purport of the "Once-a-week-to-Falmouth" order; and after the interchange of two or three more notes, he broke off relations with Germany on April 6, 1917. At last, at the eleventh hour, the United States by President Wilson's consent joined the great alliance of free nations in their life-and-death struggle to make the world safe for Democracy.

Now the President *had* to prepare for war, and prepare in haste, which rendered careful plans and economy impossible. At the start, there was much debate over the employment of Volunteers, the rating of Regulars, and the carrying out of a selective draft.

True to his policy of timidity and evasion President Wilson did not openly declare war on Germany, but allowed us to drift into a state of war; so executives who do not wish either to sign or veto a bill let it become a law without their signatures. His Secretary of War, Lindley M. Garrison, the only member of his Cabinet who had marked ability, had resigned the year before, having apparently found the official

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atmosphere uncongenial. At the Plattsburg camp, commanded by General Leonard Wood, Colonel Roosevelt made a speech of ringing patriotism and of unveiled criticism of the lack of energy in the Administration. It was not a politic thing to do, although there seems to have been some confusion between what the Colonel said to the Volunteers in camp, and what he said that same evening to a gathering of civilians in the town. The indiscretion, however, gave the Administration the opportunity it had been waiting for; but, being unable to punish Roosevelt, it severely reprimanded General Wood, who had not been aware of what the Colonel intended to say. Indeed, the offensive remarks seem to have been extemporaneous, because, as it was too dark for him to read his prepared speech, he spoke impromptu. In any event, Secretary Garrison had due notice that Roosevelt was to speak, and if he had had any doubts he should have sent word to General Wood to cancel the engagement. The Administration made as much as it could out of this impropriety, but the public saw the humor of it, because it knew that Secretary Garrison agreed with Roosevelt and Wood in their crusade for preparedness.

Later, when Mr. Garrison resigned, President Wilson put Mr. Newton D. Baker, a Pacifist, in his place, and after war came, the military preparation

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and direction of the United States were entrusted to him. But it does not belong to this biographical sketch to narrate the story of the American conduct of the war under the Wilson Administration.

To Roosevelt, the vital fact was that war was at hand, the great object for which he had striven during two years and eight months, the participation in the war which would redeem the honor of the United States, call forth the courage of its citizens, make Americans alone dominant in America and so purge this Republic of the taints of pro-Germanism, of commercial greed, and of ignoble worship of material safety, that it could take its part again at the head of the democracies of the world. He thanked God that his country could stand out again untarnished. And then a great exultation came over him, as he believed that at last he himself having put on his sword, would be allowed to join the American army bound overseas, share its dangers and glories in the field, and, if Fate so willed it, pay with his body the debt of patriotism which nothing else could pay. He wrote immediately to the War Department, offering his services and agreeing to raise a division or more of Volunteers, to be sent to the front with the briefest delay. But Secretary Baker replied that without authorization by Congress, he could not accept such bodies of Volunteers. On being pressed

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further, Mr. Baker replied that the War College Division of the General Staff wished the officers of the Regular Army to be kept at home, in order to train new men, and then to lead the first contingents which might go abroad.[1]

Meanwhile, at the first suggestion that Roosevelt might head a body of troops himself, letters poured upon him from every State in the Union, from men of all classes eager to serve under him, and eager, in this way, to wipe out the shame which they felt the Administration, by its delays and supineness, had put upon the nation. Then Congress passed the Draft Law, and, on May 18, Roosevelt appealed again, this time directly to President Wilson, offering to raise four divisions. The President, in a public statement, declared that purely military reasons caused him to reject the plan. In a telegram to Colonel Roosevelt he said that his action was "based entirely upon imperative considerations of public policy, and not upon personal or private choice." Roosevelt summed up the contention with this flat contradiction: "President Wilson's reasons for refusing my offer had nothing to do either with military considerations or with public needs."

[1] The entire correspondence between General Wood and President Wilson and Secretary Baker is given in *The Foes of Our Own Household*, by Theodore Roosevelt (Doran, New York, 1917), pp. 304–47.

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Roosevelt issued an announcement to the men who had applied for service under him — they were said already to number over 300,000 — regretting that they could not all go together on their country's errand, and brushing aside the insinuation of his enemies that he was merely seeking political and selfish ends. That is a charge, of course, to which all of our statesmen, from Washington down, have been exposed. Its final refutation comes from examining the entire public career and the character of the person accused. To any one who knew what Roosevelt's life had been, and who knew how poignantly he felt the national dangers and humiliation of the past three years, the idea that he was playing politics, and merely pretending to be terribly in earnest as a patriot, is grotesque. And I believe that no greater disappointment ever came to him than when he was prohibited from going out to battle in 1917.

Mr. Wilson and the obsolescent members of the General Staff had obviously a plausible reason when they said that the European War was not an affair for amateurs; that no troops, however brave and willing, could, like the Rough Riders in the Spanish War, be fitted for action in a month. Only by long drill and by the coördination of all branches of the service, organized on a vaster scale than the world had ever seen before, and commanded by experts,

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could an army enter the field with any hope of holding its own against the veteran armies of Europe.

We may accept this plea, but the fact remains that President Wilson refused to make the very obvious use of Roosevelt which he might have made. Roosevelt was known throughout the world as the incarnation of Americanism. If he had been sent to Europe in April, 1917, when he first requested, with only a corporal's guard to attend him, he would have been a visible proof to the masses in England, in France, and in Italy, that the United States had actually joined the Allies. He would have been the forerunner of the armies that were to follow, and his presence would have heartened immensely the then sorely perplexed, if not discouraged, populations which the Hun seemed sure to overwhelm.

But President Wilson had shown no desire to employ any American on any task where he might get credit which the President coveted for himself. In his Cabinet, his rule was to appoint only mediocre or third-class persons, whose opinions he did not think it necessary to consult. It was quite unlikely, therefore, that he would give Roosevelt any chance to shine in the service of the country, for Roosevelt was not only his political opponent, but his most formidable critic, who had laid bare the weakness of the Wilson régime. When Cavour was assembling all the

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elements in Italy to undertake the great struggle for Italian liberty and independence, he adroitly secured the coöperation of Garibaldi and his followers, although Garibaldi had declared himself the personal enemy of Cavour. Personal enemy or not, Cavour would have him as a symbol, and Garibaldi's concurrence proved of immense value to Italy. So would that of Roosevelt have proved to the Allies if he had been officially accredited by President Wilson. But Cavour was a statesman, who looked far ahead, a patriot uninfluenced by personal likes and dislikes.

Roosevelt felt his own deprivation mightily, but the shutting-out of General Leonard Wood roused his anger — all injustice roused his anger. As the motive for General Wood's exclusion was not frankly avowed, the public naturally drew its own inferences. To him, more than to any other American, we owed what little preparation for war existed when we entered the war. He founded the Plattsburg Camp; he preached very solemnly our needs and our dangers; and he did these things at the very period when President Wilson was assuring the country that we ought not to think of preparing. Doubtless, in 1919, Mr. Wilson would be glad to have those sayings of his, and many others — including the "too proud to fight," the laudation of German "humanity and justice," the "war-mad Europe," whose ravings did not con-

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cern us, the "peace without victory" forgotten; but that cannot be, and they rise to accuse him now. Macbeth did not welcome the inopportune visit of the Murderers and of Banquo's Ghost at his banquet.

General Wood had to be disciplined for allowing Colonel Roosevelt to make his impolitic speech to the Plattsburg Volunteers; he was accordingly removed from his New York headquarters to the South and then to Camp Funston in Kansas. It was even proposed to relegate him to the Philippines. When our troops began to go to France, he earnestly hoped to accompany them. There were whispers that he was physically unfit for the stress of active war: but the most diligent physical examination by Army surgeons who would have overlooked no defects, showed him to be a man of astonishing health and vigor, as sound as hickory. On the technical side, the best military experts regarded him as the best general officer in the American Army. Nevertheless, in spite of his physical and military qualifications, President Wilson rejected him. Why? The unsympathetic asserted that Mr. Wilson took care to assign no conspicuous officer to service abroad who might win laurels which would bring him forward as a Presidential possibility in 1920. On the other hand, cynics, remembering the immemorial jealousy between the Regulars and Vol-

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unteers in both the Army and Navy, declared that an outsider like General Wood, who had not come into the Army through West Point, could expect no fairer treatment from the Staff which his achievements and irregular promotion had incensed. History may be trusted to judge equitably on whom to place the blame. But as Americans recede from the event, their amazement will increase that any personal pique or class jealousy should have deprived the United States from using the soldier best equipped for war at the point where war was raging.[1]

While Roosevelt could not denounce the Administration for debarring himself from military service abroad, he could, and did, attack it for its treatment of General Wood, treatment which both did injustice to a brave and very competent soldier and deprived our Army in its need of a precious source of strength. Perhaps he drew some grim amusement from the banal utterances of the Honorable Newton D. Baker,

[1] In June, 1915, Colonel Paul Azan, who came to this country to command the French officers who taught American Volunteers at Harvard, and subsequently was commissioned by the French Government to oversee the work of all the French officers in the United States, told me that the Camp and Division commanded by General Wood were easily the best in the country and that General Wood was the only General we had who in knowledge and efficiency came up to the highest French standard. Colonel Azan added that he was suggesting to the French War Department to invite the United States Government to send General Wood to France, but this request, if ever made, was not followed.

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Secretary of War, whom he frequently referred to with appropriate comment. Two months after we entered the war, Mr. Baker issued an official bulletin in which he admitted the "difficulty, disorder, and confusion in getting things started, but," he said, "it is a happy confusion. I delight in the fact that when we entered this war we were not, like our adversary, ready for it, anxious for it, prepared for it, and inviting it. Accustomed to peace, we were not ready." [1] Could any one, except a very young child at a soap-bubble party in the nursery, have spoken thus? But Mr. Baker was not a very young child, he was a Pacifist; he did not write from a nursery, but from the War Department of the United States. In the following October he announced with undisguised self-satisfaction: "We are well on the way to the battle-field." This was too much for Roosevelt, who wrote: "For comparison with this kind of military activity we must go back to the days of Tiglath-Pileser, Nebuchadnezzar and Pharaoh. The United States should adopt the standard of speed in war which belongs to the twentieth century A.D.; we should not be content with, and still less boast about, standards which were obsolete in the seventeenth century B.C."

Roosevelt had now made a contract with the

[1] Official War Bulletin, June 7, 1917.

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Metropolitan Magazine to furnish to it a monthly article on any topic he chose, and he was also writing for the *Kansas City Star* frequent, and often daily, editorial articles. Through these he gave vent to his passionate patriotism and the reader who wishes to measure both the variety and the vigor of his polemics at this time should look through the files of those journals. But this work by no means limited his activity. As occasion stirred him, he dispatched his communications to other journals. He wrote letters, which were really elaborated arguments, to chance correspondents, and he made frequent addresses. The necessity of hurrying on the preparation of our army and of backing up our troops with undivided enthusiasm were his main theme.

But he delivered himself on other subjects almost equally important. He paid his respects to the "Conscientious Objector," and he insisted at all times that "Murder is not debatable." "Murder is murder," he wrote Professor Felix Frankfurter, "and it is rather more evil when committed in the name of a professed social movement."[1] Mr. Frankfurter was then acting, by appointment of President Wilson, as counsel to a Mediation Commission, which was dealing with recent crimes of the Industrial Workers

[1] December 19, 1917. Letter printed in full in the Boston *Herald*, June 4, 1919.

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of the World. Anarchists, when arrested, had a suspicious way of professing that they espoused anarchism only as a "philosophical" theory. Roosevelt branded several of the palliators of these — "the Hearsts and La Follettes and Bergers and Hillquits," and others — as reactionaries, as the "Bolsheviki of America," who really abetted the violent criminals by pleading for leniency for them on the ground that after all they were only "philosophical" theorists. Roosevelt was not fooled by any such plea. "When you," he told Mr. Frankfurter, "as representing President Wilson, find yourself obliged to champion men of this stamp [the "philosophical" criminals], you ought by unequivocal affirmative action to make it evident that you are sternly against their general and habitual line of conduct."

So Roosevelt pursued, without resting, his campaign to stimulate the patriotic zeal of his countrymen and to rebuke the delays and blunders of the Administration. If any one had said that he was making rhetoric a substitute for warfare — the accusation with which he charged President Wilson — he would have replied that Wilson condemned him to use the pen instead of the sword. Forbidden to go himself, he felt supreme satisfaction in the going of all his four sons, and of his son-in-law, Dr. Richard Derby. They did honor to the Roosevelt name.

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Theodore, Jr., became a Lieutenant-Colonel, Kermit and Archibald became Captains; and Quentin, the youngest, a Lieutenant of Aviation, was killed in an air battle.

Roosevelt was prevented from fighting in France, indeed, but he was gratified to learn from good authority that his efforts in the spring of 1917 to secure a commission and lead troops over seas were the immediate cause of the sending of any American troops. President Wilson, it was reported had no intention, when we went to war, of risking American lives over there, and the leisurely plans which he made for creating and training an army seemed to confirm this report. But Roosevelt's insistence and the great mass of volunteers who begged to be allowed to join his divisions, if they were organized, awakened the President to the fact that the American people expected our country to give valid military support to the Allies, at death-grapple with the Hun. The visit in May, 1917, of a French Mission with Marshal Joffre at its head, and of an English Mission under Mr. Arthur Balfour, and their plain revelation of the dire distress of the French and British armies, forced Mr. Wilson to promise immediate help; for Joffre and Balfour made him understand that unless help came soon, it would come too late. So President Wilson, who hoped to go down in

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history as the Peacemaker of the World War, and as the organizer of an American Army, which, without shedding a drop of blood, had brought peace about, was compelled to send the only too willing American soldiers, by the hundred thousand and the million, to join the Allied veterans in France.

Persons who do not penetrate beneath the flickering surfaces of life, regard these last years of Roosevelt's as an anticlimax which he passed in eclipse; as if they were the eight lean and overshadowed years, following the splendid decade in which as Governor and President he had the world's admiration and consent. But this view wholly misconceives him. It takes a man who had proved himself to be the greatest moral force in the public life of the world, and drops him when he steps down from the seat of power. Now, of course, Theodore Roosevelt did not require to walk on a high platform or to sit in the equivalent of a throne in order to be Roosevelt; and if we would read the true meaning of his life we must understand that the years which followed 1910 were the culmination and crown of all that went before.

He was a fighter from the days when, as a little boy, he fought the disease which threatened to make his existence puny and crippled. He was a fighter, and from his vantage-ground as President,

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he fought so valiantly that the world took notice and he brought new ideals into the hearts of the American people. He was just as brave and resourceful and tenacious a fighter when he led the forlorn hope, as when he marched at the head of the Nation in his campaigns against corruption and the mercenaries of Mammon. During these later years he gave up everything — his ease, his probable restoration to power, the friendships that were very dear to him, even his party which no longer, as he thought, followed the path of righteousness, or desired righteous ends — for the Cause to which he had been dedicated since youth. Analyze his acts at any period, and you will find that they were determined by his loyalty to that Cause.

And how could so great a soul exercise itself to the full, except by grappling with adversity? The prosperous days seemed to fit him like a skin, but only in these days of apparent thwarting and disappointment could he show himself equal to any blows of Fate. At first he struggled magnificently against crushing odds, asking no allowances and no favors. He founded and led the Progressive Party and, in 1912, received the most amazing popular tribute in our history. And he would have pushed on his work for that party had not the coming of the World War changed his perspective. Thenceforth, he devoted

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himself to saving civilization from the reptilian and atrocious Hun; that was a task, in comparison with which the fortune of a political party sank out of sight.

His work demanded of him to rouse his countrymen from the apathy and indifference which a timid Administration breathed upon it, and from the lethargic slumber into which the pro-Germans drugged it. During four years, his was the one voice in the United States which could not be silenced. He was listened to everywhere. Men might agree with him or not, but they listened to him, and they trusted him. Never for a moment did they suspect that he was slyly working for the enemy, or for special interests here or abroad.

He, the supreme American, spoke for America and for the civilization which he believed America fulfilled. His attacks on the delays and the incompetence, on the faint-heartedness and contradictions of the Administration had no selfish object. His heart was wrenched by the humiliation into which the honor of the United States had been dragged. The greatest patriotic service which he could render was to lift it out of that slough, and he did. The best evidence that he was right lies in the fact that President Wilson, tardily, reluctantly, adopted, one by one, Roosevelt's demands. He rejected Prepared-

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ness, when it could have been attained with comparative leisure; he accepted it, when it had to be driven through at top speed. And so of the other vitally necessary things. He ceased to warn Americans that they must be neutral "even in thought"; he ceased to comfort them by the assurance that a nation may be "too proud to fight"; he ceased to extol the "justice and humanity of the Germans." That he suffered these changes was owing to the fact that American public opinion, largely influenced by Roosevelt's word and example, would not tolerate them any more. And President Wilson, when he can, follows public opinion.

Roosevelt took personal pleasure in the bridging of the chasm which had opened between him and his former party intimates. On neither side was there recantation, but they could unite again on the question of the War and America's duty towards it, which swallowed up partisan grievances. Many of the old-time Republicans who had broken politically from Roosevelt in 1912, remained devoted personal friends, and they tried to reunite him and the discordant fragments. One of these friends was Colonel Robert Bacon, whom every one loved and trusted, a born conciliator. He it was who brought Roosevelt and Senator Root together, after more than five years' estrangement. He gave a luncheon, at which they

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and General Leonard Wood met, and they all soon fell into the old-time familiarity. Roosevelt urged vehemently his desire to go to France, and said that he would go as a private if he could not lead a regiment; that he was willing to die in France for the Cause. At which Mr. Root, with his characteristic wit, said: "Theodore, if you will promise to die there, Wilson will give you any commission you want, tomorrow."

Roosevelt never fully recovered from the infection which the fever he caught in Brazil left in his system. It manifested itself in different ways and the one thing certain was that it could not be cured. He paid little attention to it except when it actually sent him to bed. In the winter of 1918, it caused so serious an inflammation of the mastoid that he was taken to the hospital and had to undergo an operation. For several days his life hung by a thread. But, on his recovery, he went about as usual, and the public was scarcely aware of his lowered condition. He wrote and spoke, and seemed to be acting with his customary vigor. That summer, however, on July 14th, his youngest son, Quentin, First Lieutenant in the 95th American Aero Squadron, was killed in an air battle near Chambray, France. The lost child is the dearest. Roosevelt said nothing, but he never got over Quentin's loss. No doubt he often asked, in

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silence, why he, whose sands were nearly run, had not been taken and the youth, who had a lifetime to look forward to, had not been spared. The day after the news came, the New York State Republican Convention met at Saratoga. Roosevelt was to address it, and he walked up the aisle without hesitating, and spoke from the platform as if he had no thoughts in his heart, except the political and patriotic exhortation which he poured out.

He passed a part of the summer with his daughter, Mrs. Derby, on the coast of Maine; and in the early autumn, at Carnegie Hall, he made his last public speech, in behalf of Governor Whitman's candidacy. A little after this, he appeared for the last time in public at a meeting in honor of a negro hospital unit. In a few days another outbreak of the old infection caused his removal to the Roosevelt Hospital. The date was November 11th, — the day when the Armistice was signed. He remained at the hospital until Christmas Eve, often suffering acutely from inflammatory rheumatism, the name the physicians gave to the new form the infection took. He saw his friends for short intervals, he followed the news, and even dictated letters on public subjects, but his family understood that his marvelous physical strength was being sadly exhausted. He longed to be taken home to Sagamore Hill, and when his

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A FAMILY GROUP

Roosevelt, Mrs. Archibald B. Roosevelt, Mrs. Roosevelt, Mrs. Richard Derby (Ethel Roosevelt), and Three Grandchildren

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doctor allowed him to go home, he was greatly cheered.

To spend Christmas there, with his family, even though he had to spend it very quietly, delighted him. For ten days he seemed to be gaining, he read much, and dictated a good deal. On January 5th, he reviewed a book on pheasants and wrote also a little message to be read at the meeting of the American Defense Society, which he was unable to attend. That evening he spent with the family, going to bed at eleven o'clock. "Put out the light, please," he said to his attendant, James Amos, and no one heard his voice again. A little after four o'clock the next morning, Amos, noticing that he breathed strangely, called the nurse, and when they reached his bedside, Roosevelt was dead. A blood clot in his heart had killed him. Death had unbound Prometheus.

By noon on that day, the 6th of January, 1919, the whole world knew of his death, and as the news sank in, the sense of an unspeakable void was felt everywhere. He was buried on January 8th, on a knoll in the small country graveyard, which he and Mrs. Roosevelt had long before selected, overlooking Oyster Bay and the waters of the Sound. His family and relatives and dear friends, and a few persons who represented State and Nation, the Rough Riders, and learned societies, attended the services in

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the little church. Just as the coffin was being borne in, the sun came out and streamed through the stained-glass windows. "The services were most impressive in their simplicity, in their sense of intimacy, in the sentiment that filled the hour and the place of personal loss and of pride of possession of a priceless memory." The bearers took the coffin through the grove, with its bare trees and light sifting of snow, to the grave; and as it was committed, there were many sobs and tears of old and young. Rough Riders, who had fought by his side, cabinet ministers who had served with him, companions of his work and of his playtime, were all mourners now, and some of those men of affairs, who had done their utmost to wreck him eight years before, now knew that they had loved him, and they grieved as they realized what America and the world had lost. "Death had to take him sleeping," said Vice-President Marshall; "for if Roosevelt had been awake, there would have been a fight."

The evil men do lives after them; so does the good. With the passing of years, a man's name and fame either drift into oblivion, or they are seen in their lasting proportions. You must sail fifty miles over the Ionian Sea and look back before you can fully measure the magnitude and majesty of Mount Ætna.

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Not otherwise, I believe, will it be with Theodore Roosevelt, when the people of the future look back upon him. The blemishes due to misunderstanding will have faded away; the transient clouds will have vanished; the world will see him as he was.

I do not mean that it will reduce him to an abstraction of perfection, as ill-judged worshipers of George Washington attempted to do with him. Theodore Roosevelt was so vastly human, that no worshiper can make him abstract and retain recognizable features. We have reached the time when we will not suffer anybody to turn our great ones into gods or demigods, and to remove them far from us to dwell, like absentee deities, on a remote Olympus, or in an unimaginable Paradise; we must have them near, intimates whom our souls can converse with, and our hearts love. Such an intimate was Roosevelt living, and such an intimate will he be dead. Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt — those are the three whom Americans will cherish and revere; each of them a leader and representative and example in a structural crisis in our national life.

Those of us who knew him, knew him as the most astonishing human expression of the Creative Spirit we had ever seen. His manifold talents, his protean interests, his tireless energy, his thunderbolts which he did not let loose, as well as those he did, his mas-

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terful will sheathed in self-control like a sword in its scabbard, would have rendered him superhuman, had he not possessed other qualities which made him the best of playmates for mortals. He had humor, which raises every one to the same level. He had loyalty, which bound his friends to him for life. He had sympathy, and capacity for strong, deep love. How tender he was with little children! How courteous with women! No matter whether you brought to him important things or trifles, he understood.

I can think of no vicissitude in life in which Roosevelt's participation would not have been welcome. If it were danger, there could be no more valiant comrade than he; if it were sport, he was a sportsman; if it were mirth, he was a fountain of mirth, crystal pure and sparkling. He would have sailed with Jason on the ship *Argo* in quest of the Golden Fleece, and he would have written a vivid description of the adventure. I can imagine the delight he would have taken, as the comrade of Ulysses, on his voyage through the Midland Sea, looking with unjaded curiosity on strange towns and into strange faces, and steering fearlessly out to the Hesperides, and beyond the baths of all the western stars. What a Crusader he would have been! How he would have smitten the Paynim with his sword, and then unvisored and held chivalrous interview with Saladin!

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Had he companioned Columbus, he would not have been one of those who murmured and besought the great Admiral to turn back, but would have counseled, "On! On! It is of little matter whether any one man fails or succeeds; but the cause shall not fail, for it is the cause of mankind." I can see him with the *voyageurs* of New France, exploring the Canadian Wilderness, and the rivers and forests of the Northwest. I can see him with Lasalle, beaming with exultation as they looked on the waters of the Mississippi; and I can think of no battle for man's welfare in which he would not have felt at home. But he would have taken equal, perhaps greater, delight in meeting the authors, sages, and statesmen, whose words were his daily joy, and whose deeds were his study and incentive. I can hear him question Thucydides for further details as to the collapse of the Athenians at Syracuse; or cross-examine Herodotus for information of some of his incredible but fascinating stories. What hours he would have spent in confabulation with Gibbon! What secrets he would have learned, without asking questions, from Napoleon and Cavour!

His interest embraced them all, some of them he could have taught, many of them would have welcomed him as their peer. As he mixed with high and low in his lifetime, so would it have been in the past;

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and so will it be in the future, if he has gone into a world where personal identity continues, and the spiritual standards and ideals of this world persist. But yesterday, he seemed one who embodied Life to the utmost. With the assured step of one whom nothing can frighten or surprise, he walked our earth, as on granite. Suddenly, the granite grew more unsubstantial than a bubble, and he dropped beyond sight into the Eternal Silence. Happy we who had such a friend! Happy the American Republic which bore such a son!

THE END

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MR. JOHN WOODBURY, Secretary of the Harvard Class of 1880, in sending to his classmates a notice of Theodore Roosevelt's death on January 6, 1919, added this quotation from the second part of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress:"

"After this it was noised abroad that Mr. Valiant-for-truth was taken with a summons by the same post as the other, and had this for a token that the summons was true, 'That his pitcher was broken at the fountain.' When he understood it, he called for his friends and told them of it. Then he said, 'I am going to my Father's, and though with great difficulty I have got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles who now will be my rewarder.'"

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